

**Bullying in Physical Education:
Its prevalence & impact on the intention to continue secondary school physical education**

Vanessa Hurley, B.Sc (Hons.)

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Supervisor: James Mandigo, PhD

**JAMES A GIBSON LIBRARY
BROCK UNIVERSITY
ST. CATHARINES ON**

**Faculty of Applied Health Science, Brock University
St. Catharines, Ontario**

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to determine the prevalence of bullying in physical education and its influence on students' intention to participate in the class in the future. Additionally, the study researched the relationship between bullying and body image as well as bullying and physical competency in physical education. A survey was utilized that collected both quantitative and qualitative data about students' experiences in physical education. Two-hundred and thirty-four grade 10 students (144 female and 90 male) from 8 different secondary schools participated in the study. Data analyses were completed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16.0. Results showed that approximately 18.3% of respondents had experienced physical bullying in physical education; 23.7% had experienced verbal bullying; and 20.4% experienced social bullying. Furthermore, those who experienced frequent bullying in physical education did not intend on taking the class in the future. The relationship between body image and bullying was not found to be significant. However, physical competence was found to significantly predict bullying in physical education. These results show how prevalent bullying is in physical education classes and how it negatively impacts future participation in the class.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Physical education is defined as “a school subject designed to help children and youth develop the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary for participating in active, healthy living” (Fishburne & Hickson, 2005, p.2). Physical activity encompasses sports, dance, and exercise and is used in physical education as a medium for teaching curriculum content (Fishburne & Hickson, 2005). In Ontario, over 50% of students will drop out of physical education class after they have achieved the single physical education credit needed in order to graduate (Pepler et al., 2006a). More specifically, teenage girls between the ages of 12 and 17 represent the highest increase in obesity rates and sedentary behaviours within the past ten years (Wharry, 2002).

In response to the high percentage of physical education dropouts, studies have been conducted to determine the factors that deter students from physical education participation. Most notably, being bullied has been cited as a major reason as to why students dropout of physical education (Carney & Merrell, 2001; Cockburn & Clarke, 2002; Dwyer et al., 2006b; Hills, 2007). Specifically, the more frequently one is bullied in physical education, the more likely they are to dropout after the class has been completed (Carney & Merrell, 2001; Lenskyj & van-Daalen Smith, 2006). Being bullied in physical education class has also been found to negatively influence body image development of teenagers (Eisenberg & Neumark-Sztainer, 2003; Kumpulainen et al., 1998; Smolak, 2004). Additionally, the more frequently one is bullied about their competence in physical education class, the more likely they are to dropout after receiving a single physical education credit (Cockburn & Clarke, 2002).

Few studies have examined secondary school physical education participation in Ontario. One notable exception is Dwyer et al, who in 2006 conducted a study regarding physical education participation rates in Ontario. From grades 9 to 12, the percentages of secondary students enrolled in physical education classes were 97.9%, 49.6%, 43.3%, and 35.9% respectively (Dwyer et al., 2006a). A decline in physical education participation has been steady for a number of years. In 1998, 63% of grade ten students were enrolled in a physical education course compared to 50% in 2004 (Dwyer et al., 2006a).

The prevalence of bullying in physical education is yet to be studied in Ontario secondary schools. Bullying traditionally occurs in three forms: direct (physical); direct verbal aggression; and indirect (Crothers & Levinson, 2004; Olweus, 1997). Direct bullying is overt and includes physical aggression such as kicking, hitting, and punching (Harris & Petrie, 2003). Verbal aggression includes teasing, name-calling, accusatory comments and shouting in the face of the victim (Carney & Merrell, 2001). Indirect bullying, believed to be more common among females, is relatively covert and involves social isolation, manipulation, and intentional exclusion from a social group (Pepler et al., 2006). Forty-nine percent of Canadian students have reported being verbally or physically bullied at least once or twice during a semester at school (Goldbaum et al., 2007). Those who are bullied have been found to be at an increased risk for psychosomatic complaints such as headache, dizziness, vomiting and feeling tense (Kelly, 2009).

Bullying in physical education has been found to negatively affect body image (Lunde et al., 2005; Lunde et al., 2007; Thompson et al., 1999). Body image is defined as “a person’s perceptions, thoughts, feelings, and behaviours towards their body” (Grogan, 1999, p.1). During adolescence and into their teenage years, many individuals experience decreased satisfaction with their bodies (Grogan, 1999). Body dissatisfaction is defined as “a person’s negative thoughts and feelings about his or her body” (Grogan, 1999, p.2), and acts as an accurate gauge of one’s body image. Bullying that takes place in physical education class has been found to increase body dissatisfaction (Lunde et al., 2005). However, there is limited research that discusses the relationship between body image and physical education participation. Nonetheless, studies have suggested that because the body is so central in the performance of physical activity, those who are dissatisfied with their appearance will not partake in physical education after achieving one required credit (Cockburn & Clarke, 2002; Dwyer et al., 2006b; Hills, 2006; Lenskyj & van Daalen, 2006).

Physical competence has also been found to influence physical education participation (Carroll & Loumidis, 2001). Physical competence refers to the appraisal of one’s abilities in physical education and performing challenges optimal to personal capacities (Deci & Ryan, 1985). In addition, physical competence includes the ability to learn new skills and have confidence in a physical education environment (Carroll & Loumidis, 2001). Those with higher perceived physical competence in physical education are more likely to participate in physical activity for a longer duration at a higher intensity (Carroll & Loumidis, 2001). However, when the learning environment is

perceived to be too challenging or threatening, competence as well as physical education participation decreases (Mitchell, 1996).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the current research study was to investigate the prevalence of bullying in physical education and how it impacts physical education participation after grade 10 in Ontario. More specifically, this study focused on the secondary school physical education experiences of participants. As a result, the study examined the prevalence of bullying in physical education and how bullying influences students' intention to take the class in the future. In addition, the relationships between bullying and body image as well as bullying and physical competence in physical education were also studied. Two-hundred and thirty-four grade 10 students (144 female and 90 male) from 8 different secondary schools participated in the study. A survey was distributed to participants asking them to report the frequency in which they experienced bullying behaviours in physical education, with emphasis being placed upon recollections of grade 9 and 10 experiences. Body image, measured by body satisfaction, as well as physical competence during the class was also reported. Differences between genders and how often they experienced bullying behaviours were analyzed. Analysis then focused on how bullying influenced the intention to take physical education in the future. Finally, the relationships between bullying and body image as well as bullying and physical competence were studied.

Significance of Study

A review of the literature revealed that no studies have addressed the prevalence of bullying during physical education classes in Ontario. No studies were found that examined how bullying influences students' participation in physical education. Studies that have investigated the relationships between bullying and body image as well as bullying and physical competence in physical education are limited in number. Ultimately, this study aimed to investigate the prevalence of bullying in physical education and the influence it has on physical education participation in Ontario. The findings from this study can lead to the creation of new strategies that combat bullying in physical education. This study is significant in that it also examined gender differences in reported frequencies of bullying behaviours, body image dissatisfaction and feelings of physical competence in physical education. As children, adolescents and teenagers spend most of their time in school, it is necessary to foster the important role physical education has in attaining the recommended daily amount of activity and exercise. As many teenagers no longer participate in activity and sport outside of school (Dwyer et al., 2006a), physical education is an ideal way for students to experience daily exercise. From the results, health and physical educators will be able to understand the impact of these factors on future physical education participation in secondary schools. This study is therefore timely and necessary in determining how health educators can promote physical education participation throughout secondary school.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter defines and describes bullying, body image and physical competence. In addition, this section also explains the reasons why physical education participation has become such an important issue in relation to the health of adolescents and youth in the past decade.

Physical Education: Curricular Requirements and Selection

In Ontario, only one secondary school physical education credit is needed in order to graduate (Ontario Ministry of Education & Training, 1999). After the single credit has been achieved, individuals are not required to further their participation in physical education unless they choose to do so (Allison et al., 2000). The majority of students will register and complete a grade 9 physical education course, which usually consists of three one-hour classes per week in a semester program. Many will choose not to participate in another physical education class after their single credit has been achieved (Dwyer et al., 2006a). As a result, there is a steep decline in physical education participation throughout the course of high school, particularly among teenage and adolescent females (Allison et al., 2000).

Dwyer et al (2006a) conducted a study in Ontario regarding secondary school physical education participation. Six-hundred secondary schools were randomly sampled and respondents were 474 physical education teachers who reported student enrolment in their classes. The steepest decline in enrolment was seen between grades 9 and 10. This

was attributed to the provincial requirement for a single physical education credit needed to graduate (Allison et al., 2000; Dwyer et al., 2006a).

Participating in physical education is necessary to achieve healthy physical development for teenagers. A study conducted by Koezuka et al in 2005 found that over 67% of Canadian female teenagers and over 50% of Canadian male teenagers are inactive. Additionally, the 2006 Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth found that more than half of children and teenagers do not meet the minimum daily physical activity requirements to support healthy development and growth (Glover, 2007). As a result, obesity levels have been on the rise among Canadian youth. Between 1991 and 1996, the number of young females carrying excessive weight increased from 15% to 23.6%, leaving many to believe that Canadian youth are contributing to an obesity epidemic (Wharry, 2002). Physical education allows at least 60 minutes of physical activity on the days in which it is offered. Inactivity within Ontario youth has continued to rise, most notably among adolescents aged 12 to 17 (Glover, 2007). It is important to note that it is within this population where physical education dropout most commonly occurs.

Dangerous consequences result from a lack of physical activity participation. Early onset puberty, development of asthma and breathing difficulties, type two diabetes, and cardiovascular problems can all result from a lack of physical activity (Glover, 2007). As a result, the Canadian health care system becomes overburdened as care for these individuals becomes extremely labour intensive and costly. It is estimated that obesity costs the Government of Ontario over \$1.1 billion a year in direct health care

costs (Colman, 2001). Individuals who become ill at a young age place a large burden on the health care system as they are in need of treatment for the duration of their lives.

As physical education participation has become an important health issue among teenagers, the following section will describe factors that may have an influence on physical education participation in Ontario secondary schools.

Factors influencing physical education participation: Activity selection

The absence of a variety of activities taught within many Ontario physical education programs has been found to discourage participation in future physical education classes (Andres & Michaud, 1990; Chernysh & Crossman, 1994; Dwyer et al., 2006b). Traditional competitive sports such as basketball, track and field, and volleyball deter students from participating in physical education because they teach specific skills and positions that are repetitive from one year to the next (Humbert, 2006a). Additionally, running activities and fitness testing are viewed as unfavourable by male and female physical education students (Luke & Sinclair, 1991). The competitive nature of these traditional sports has been recognized as a strong deterrent from physical education participation (Chernysh & Crossman, 1994; Dwyer et al., 2006b). By the time they reach their teenage years, many students are no longer participating in activity outside of school. As such, many feel disconnected from the athletic task they are asked to perform in class (Sleap & Wormald, 2001). Repetitive activities that students do not relate to or enjoy lead them to devalue their experience in physical education and later influence them to cease participation after a single credit is achieved.

Competition

Students may believe their current skill level is not balanced with the challenges faced during physical education class (Humbert, 2006a). The pressure that competition places on teenagers makes them feel extremely uncomfortable when trying to perform an athletic skill in front of their peers (Dwyer et al., 2006b). Many young women would rather work together with a partner in class than against them as an opponent (Humbert, 2006a). Male students have stated that they disliked physical education because they could not keep up with the rest of the class (Luke & Sinclair, 1991). Instead they prefer classes where they are with people of the same athletic standard (Bramham, 2003). Furthermore, when females do not succeed in competitive sports and games in physical education class, they become more opposed to attending future classes throughout the course of the semester (Chernysh & Crossman, 1994). Experiencing fun is of utmost importance in physical education. Youth are likely to enjoy participating in activities that are deemed as 'fun' in the class (Humbert et al., 2006b).

Co-educational Physical Education Classes

Previous studies have found that girls and boys prefer physical education in a same-sex environment (Chernysh & Crossman, 1994; Humbert, 2006a; Luke & Sinclair, 1991; Portman, 2003; Singleton 2006). The majority of students want to be in physical education class with their friends so that they can feel more comfortable and have a more enjoyable experience (Humbert, 2006a). Many females who are self-conscious of their abilities do not want to be paired up against males who they believe have skills superior to their own (Portman, 2003). This is both intimidating and stress-inducing for female

students who doubt their abilities. There also exists a fear of humiliation if they fail their required task (Humbert, 2006a). Generally in Ontario, grade 9 and 10 physical education classes are segregated, while senior level grade 11 and 12 classes are coeducational (Singleton, 2006). This can deter females from physical education participation in the future if they do not wish to be in an upper year class with male students.

Teacher Relationship

Students who lack a rapport with their physical education teacher are more likely to have a negative experience in the class and cease their participation after they have achieved their compulsory credit (Chernysh & Crossman, 1994). Physical education students have stated that they appreciate when teachers encourage them despite low abilities in the class (Luke & Sinclair, 1991). However, students have also claimed that their teachers did not take interest in them and did little to encourage further participation in physical activity and sport (Dwyer et al., 2006b). As such, these students may not see any importance in participating in physical education and choose to take another course that may interest them more. Furthermore, many students believe that physical education teachers tend to favour the 'elite' athletes in their class who excel at physical activity and play on a school sports team (Dwyer et al., 2006b). This makes the other students in the class feel like they are not being paid attention to because they are not 'athletic' enough to successfully complete the skills being taught during class.

Luke and Sinclair conducted a study in 1991 which found that both genders disliked the method in which they were evaluated by their teacher. More specifically, they stated that their evaluation was unfair because it was based on a single fitness test or

skill (Luke & Sinclair, 1991). These students also disliked that their teacher gave no choice in activity selection and did not give them the appropriate guidance needed into how they were supposed to perform the activity (Luke & Sinclair, 1991).

'Ideal Femininity'

In physical education, liberal feminists have focused on the socialization of female and male students into gender-specific activities (Flintoff & Scraton, 2005). Females are socialized into activities that emphasize appearance and control while males are socialized into aggressive, competitive activities emphasizing strength (Flintoff & Scraton, 2005). Females today are pressured to conform to emphasized femininity, which entails them being thin, fashionable, and constantly conscious of their appearance (Cockburn & Clarke, 2002). The construction of 'normative' femininity involves images of passivity, good appearance, domesticity, heterosexuality and of not being competitive-images that are difficult to fulfil on a muddy field (Dwyer, 2006b). Peer pressure intensifies this culture of femininity (Scraton, 1990). For example, if a female friend does not want to participate in certain physical activities, it diminishes the enthusiasm of fellow friends and encourages dropout as a group (Scraton, 1990).

Typically, females have ranked excelling in physical activity very low in attributes they would like to possess (Gibbons et al., 1999). Many females do not like breaking into a sweat in physical education class because it compromises their feminine appearance. Teenage females are extremely conscious of their physical appearance and feel uncomfortable when they have to perform activities referred to as 'masculine' in front of peers (Dwyer et al., 2006b). Many have asserted that when participating in

physical education class, they have to choose between being feminine and being physically active (Dwyer et al., 2006b), often leading females to cease physical education participation after achieving one credit.

'Ideal Masculinity'

The social construction of gender for males can also be problematic in physical education classes (Scruton, 1990). Strong athletic performances in activity and physical education are traits highly valued by male students (Gibbons et al., 1999). Males are encouraged to develop strength, aggression, and confidence in their physical prowess (Flintoff & Scruton, 2005). Affiliated with heterosexuality, these traits are collectively known as *desirable masculinity* and are regularly practiced in physical education classes (Bramham, 2003; Flintoff & Scruton, 2005). In physical education, masculine identity is often affirmed through homophobic commentary that denigrates those who are perceived as or who are homosexual (Flintoff & Scruton, 2005). This type of masculinity can present a problem for male students who feel they are physically weak, unfit and non-competitive when participating in physical education (Luke & Sinclair, 1991). Individuals who do not conform to this masculine 'ideal' may feel as though they do not belong in an aggressive environment such as physical education. There is an expectation that male students will enjoy competitive, boisterous team games when this is not always the case (Scruton, 1990). When individuals do not conform to these masculine ideals in physical education, they are often ridiculed and cease further participation in physical education (Flintoff & Scruton, 2005).

Course Availability

Many students have stated they do not have the time to fit physical education into their timetables (Dwyer et al., 2006b). Although some would like to continue on with physical education courses, this may not be possible due to graduation requirements. Physical education often receives less priority than other academic subjects (Dwyer et al., 2006a). Since grade thirteen was eliminated from the Ontario curriculum in 2003, students must now fit the required courses needed for graduation into a four year schedule. In many instances, physical education classes are scheduled at the same time that required core courses such as math take place. Multiple math, science, and English courses are needed in order to graduate as compared to only one physical education credit. This leads many students to complete only the single required credit. Furthermore, upper year physical education courses are not prerequisites of any university or college degree programs, leading many to devalue the importance of taking physical education courses even if they intend on majoring in the degree field.

The next section will define bullying and discuss its prevalence and influence on the intention to participate in secondary school physical education.

Bullying Defined

Bullying is defined as “repeated exposure to purposeful attempts to injure or inflict discomfort and pain on another individual through words, physical contact, gestures, or exclusion from a group” (Olweus, 1993, p.1). Bullying is often defined as an ongoing occurrence that is unprovoked and unwanted by victims. It is intentionally harmful, aggressive behaviour where there exists an imbalance of power between two parties in a

relationship (Harris & Petrie, 2003). In most cases, the individual who is in a position of power will begin to bully the other person. The power advantage found within these relationships often arises from differentials in size, strength, physical abilities, social status, personality type, and popularity (Pepler et al., 2004). All acts of bullying involve an individual or group of individuals devaluing another in the hopes of making themselves seem superior to their victims and peers (Carney & Merrell, 2001). Acts of bullying evoke feelings of fear, distress, shame, and humiliation in victims (Kumpulainen et al., 2001). Bullying works to establish and maintain social dominance through overt aggression and harassment (Carney & Merrell, 2001). Those who are victims of bullying are often too intimidated and anxious to stand up to the aggressor. As a result, the status quo of the relationship remains the same.

Forms of Bullying

Generally, there are three forms of bullying that have been identified in the literature: *direct bullying*, *direct verbal aggression* and *indirect bullying* (Crothers & Levinson, 2004; Olweus, 1997). Direct bullying is easily detectable and relatively overt; it is comprised of harmful acts of physical behaviour and aggression. The literature states that this form of bullying is most commonly demonstrated by males (Harris & Petrie, 2003). In recent years however, there has been an increased trend of physical bullying by females (Shariff, 2008). Examples of this bullying form include acts of pushing, kicking, punching, and hitting. There is another form of direct bullying known as *verbal aggression*. This type of bullying includes behaviours such as teasing, name-calling, accusing, and shouting in the face of the victim (Carney & Merrell, 2001). Examples of

such verbal aggression include being teased about physical appearance, popularity, social status, and level of intelligence. Conversely, indirect bullying is extremely covert and often goes unnoticed by others. This type of bullying is also known as *relational victimization* and most commonly occurs in females, although these behaviours are currently on the rise in males (Crothers & Levinson, 2004). Indirect bullying involves social isolation, manipulation, and intentional exclusion from a group or friendship for the purpose of retaliation (Pepler et al., 2004). Individuals exclude others from being a part of their social group and will work to manipulate the way others feel towards the individual who is being bullied. This is usually done by spreading slanderous rumours about them. Indirect bullying is more difficult to detect as it usually occurs subtly without the victim knowing what is actually being said about them (Carney & Merrell, 2001).

Victim & Bully Characteristics

Two groups of individuals exist when incidents of bullying occur: the *victim* and the *bully*. Those who are victims are repeatedly targeted and forced to endure intentionally harmful behaviours. They usually possess insecure, submissive, and anxious personality traits (Olweus, 1997). These individuals are easily dominated and instead of defending themselves in times of conflict, they choose to withdraw from peers when they are being attacked by bullies. Victims do not usually provoke acts of bullying, and are not prone to engaging in violent retaliatory behaviours (Olweus, 1993). Instead, they tend to blame themselves for the bullying behaviours that they are enduring, seeing themselves as worthless, ugly, stupid, and deserving of the harassment (Carney & Merrell, 2001).

Bullies on the other hand, tend to be physically larger than those they target and have personality characteristics which are impulsive, forceful, intimidating, and manipulative (Olweus, 1997). They lack empathy for those they bully and view them as weak and cowardly individuals who are deserving of the harassment (Carney & Merrell, 2001). Bullies can also claim that their behaviour was in a 'joking' manner thereby removing themselves from any consequences that result from it (Kowalski, 2000). Although the bully might view his or her own actions as mere 'jokes', bullying behaviours are always open to interpretation by the person on the receiving end (Kowalski, 2000). Bullies usually seek out who they believe to be the 'weakest' individual and prey on the most sensitive areas - for example, appearance, level of intelligence, or popularity (Floyd, 1985). They do not usually regret the intentionally harmful acts they commit, and view their behaviour as justifiable and reasonable.

Prevalence of Bullying in School

In 2007, 49% of Canadian students reported being verbally or physically bullied at least once or twice during the school term (Goldbaum et al., 2007). This appears to be a growing concern given the statistics reported in 1995 indicated that only 15.5% of Canadian students acknowledged being bullied at school more than once or twice per term (Charach et al., 1995). Most school bullying occurs during recess or lunch when students are not under direct teacher supervision (Craig et al., 2000). The primary fear high school students have listed is a fear of being teased at school (Kowalski, 2000). Acts of bullying are most likely to occur in school environments where peer and social groups are in contact with each other on a daily basis. As such, bullying is believed to be a

unique form of aggression which is exclusively social in nature (Bjorkqvist et al., 1982). While bullying behaviours can occur at all ages, evidence suggests that the peak period of its occurrence is between the ages of 9 and 15 (Hazler, 1996). Between these ages, changes begin happening to bodily development as well as to school and social environments. Differences in height, weight, secondary sexual characteristics, and levels of coordination become obvious during these years and are often the targets of bullies (Carney & Merrell, 2001). Bullies are also likely to tease or verbally humiliate any individual whose personality, behaviour or appearance lies significantly outside of the 'norm'.

Pepler et al (2006) conducted a study in Ontario which measured self-reported frequency of being bullied from grades 6 to 12. The purpose of the study was to determine the prevalence of bullying during adolescence. Approximately 1900 students from various classes participated in the study. The results showed that reports of being bullied steadily declined with successive grade level, with the exception of grade 9. Both males and females reported that it was in grade 9 where a significant increase in the instances of being bullied occurred. Within these transitional years from elementary to secondary school, adolescents and teenagers are at a point of their social development where fitting in and being accepted by peers is of the utmost importance to them (Carney & Merrell, 2001). The transition to a new school environment includes a larger peer group, which leaves many individuals vulnerable as they try to establish themselves in a new social context (Pepler et al., 2006). As a result of being bullied, one may lose

Bullying & Physical Education Participation

Within the context of physical education, bullying behaviours have been examined by a number of researchers. Many suggest that being bullied in physical education adds to the stigmatization of the class among adolescents for both genders (Bramham, 2003; Cockburn & Clarke, 2002; Dwyer et al., 2006b; Flintoff & Scraton, 2005; Hills, 2007; Scraton 1990). It has been found that those who are bullied often fear attending physical education class and are at an increased risk of truancy and dropping out (Carney & Merrell, 2001). The physical violence and intimidation that occurs in physical education deters students from further participation in the class. Bullying that initially comes in the form of verbal harassment can escalate to physical threats and acts of violence during sport and activity (Lenskyj & van Daalen, 2006; Parker, 1996). This results in an environment where students feel uncomfortable attending future classes for fear that they may be physically harmed by another student. Those who bully and are overly competitive use their physical size and strength to intimidate other students (Carney & Merrell, 2001). This is usually done through the forceful pushing or shoving of others when participating in various sports and activities (Dwyer et al., 2006b; Parker, 1996). Sustaining injuries and engaging in rough play during physical education class lead students to discontinue their participation in physical education classes because they are both intimidated and fearful of their aggressors.

As students enter into adolescence, they become ever more aware of their bodies and the constant evaluation it endures from their peers. Physical education presents problems particularly for females due to expectations of heterosexual appearance, where

friendships and popularity status, making the creation and maintenance of new social networks more difficult.

Impact of Bullying on the Health of Children and Teenagers

Bullying has been found to negatively impact mental and physical health. Teenagers who are bullied often possess low self-esteem and feel insecure about themselves (Rigby, 1999). They often see themselves as worthless and blame themselves for the attacks they suffer (Carney & Merrell, 2001). In teenage females, being bullied has been linked to the development of eating disorders (Kaltiala-Heino et al., 2000). Those who are bullied often suffer from bouts of depression and are generally less happy than others (Slee & Rigby, 1993). Frequent bullying can cause increased stress for the individual. Severe stress can alter a person's emotional state leading to depression and anxiety (Rigby, 1999). Individuals who suffer from bullying throughout their teenage years tend to continue to have low self-esteem and suffer from bouts of depression into adulthood (Olweus, 1992).

Physical health problems have also been found in those who are bullied throughout their adolescent and teenage years. Headaches and stomach aches have been commonly cited by children who have reported being recently bullied at school (Williams et al., 1996). Other physical maladies that have been reported by students who are bullied include dizziness, sleeping problems, poor appetite, bedwetting and vomiting (Kelly, 2009). Stress can also cause problems with physiological functions (Cox, 1995). For example, stress may cause lowered immunity leading to infections and a wide range of health complaints (Rigby, 1999).

'beauty' routines demand the styling of hair and application of makeup (Lenskyj & van Daalen, 2006). Maintaining a flawless appearance is nearly impossible in physical education class, with sweating and exertion being the result of activity. In this forum, peers are more likely to bully or tease a peer based on how she looks in her 'gym clothes' and how her body do not conform to societal ideals of femininity or masculinity (Cockburn & Clarke, 2002; Flintoff & Scraton, 2005). The establishment of an idealised physicality in physical education class results in a social order where some bodies are devalued while other bodies are privileged (Hills, 2007). Heavier girls are often the targets of painful teasing and taunting by classmates, and as such, are the likeliest to discontinue their participation in physical education (Lenskyj & van Daalen, 2006). Males who are short, thin and lack muscle mass often experience teasing from classmates (Flintoff & Scraton, 2005). The scaling of bodies that occurs through public humiliation and embarrassment decreases the willingness of students to engage in physical activities (Hills, 2007).

Research has indicated that one reason females do not further their participation in physical education class is because they are self-conscious about their appearance (Cockburn & Clarke, 2002). Furthermore, male students have also cited their physical education uniform as a negative aspect of physical education (Luke & Sinclair, 1991). In many cases, the heightened awareness of their physical appearance occurred after being taunted and teased about how they looked in their gym uniform (Dwyer et al., 2006b; Lenskyj & van Daalen, 2006). Gym uniforms are usually comprised of shorts and a t-shirt, allowing many areas of the body to be seen and therefore judged by peers.

Differences in biological maturation levels and secondary sexual characteristics at this time are glaringly obvious and are often the targets of hurtful teasing (Carney & Merrell, 2001). Nonverbal behaviours such as leering, looking, and gesturing are also forms of bullying that students face while wearing their gym uniforms (Flintoff & Scraton, 2005; Lenskyj & van Daalen, 2006). These forms of constant judging decrease willingness to engage in activity and future physical education courses as they feel their bodies are under constant scrutiny.

Issues around females who move into activities once defined as 'masculine' are being presented in physical education settings (Flintoff & Scraton, 2007). Females who excel at physical activity and sport may be bullied about their muscular bodies and high level of performance. Bullying comes from stepping out of the female image and into one that is perceived as being more 'masculine' within society (Cockburn & Clarke, 2002). Some females students have reported feeling as though they are demonstrating masculine or 'tomboy' qualities when performing an athletic skill and worry they will be mocked as such (Dwyer et al., 2006b). Athletic adolescent females are often branded as 'lesbians', 'dykes', and 'homosexuals' by fellow classmates (Flintoff & Scraton, 2005). Males who do not perform well in physical education may be labelled 'gay' or 'homosexual' (Park, 1996). Adolescents who find themselves in this situation are more likely to comply with the dominant gender order to avoid the humiliation and branding that accompanies such name-calling (Cockburn & Clarke, 2002).

A review of literature has found that bullying does influence physical education participation. Likewise, bullying has been cited as a negative influence on body image

development among teenagers (Cockburn & Clarke, 2002). The next section will define body image and discuss its relationship to bullying in physical education.

Body Image Defined

Body image is defined as “a person’s perceptions, thoughts, feelings and behaviours towards his or her body” (Grogan, 1999, p.1). As such, body image is considered a multidimensional construct comprised of an individual’s affect, cognitions, perceptions, and behaviours in relation to one’s body (Lox et al., 2003). The affective domain of body image is reflective of the feelings that one associates with the body’s shape and size (Grogan, 1999). Included in this domain are negative feelings of anxiety, distress, and sadness as well as positive feelings such as pride and comfort (Thompson et al., 1999). The cognitive dimension of body image consists of what the individual finds attractive in relation to fitness, strength and body composition (Grogan, 1999). The perceptual component of body image is defined as the estimation of one’s body size (Grogan, 1999). Typically, females usually overestimate their body weight (Thompson et al., 1999). For example, many female teenagers perceive themselves as being overweight when they are indeed thin or at a healthy weight. This perceptual domain also includes the ways in which an individual thinks they appear to others (Thompson et al., 1999). Finally, the behavioural aspect of body image encompasses the actions an individual takes that reflect the perceptions held towards the body (Lox et al., 2003). This includes avoiding certain situations that elicit scrutiny of the body. Examples include avoiding swimming because of the focus of the body in a swimsuit, or refraining from participating in physical activity because of the centrality of the body in front of others (Thompson et al., 1999).

Body Dissatisfaction among Teenagers

Body dissatisfaction is defined as “a person’s negative thoughts and feelings about his or her body” (Grogan, 1999, p.2). Body dissatisfaction is commonly measured by self-report questionnaires designed to quantify body dissatisfaction (Grogan, 1999). An individual’s level of body dissatisfaction provides an accurate gauge of body image (Irwin & Tucker, 2006). Dissatisfaction with one’s body can be based on certain physical characteristics, parts of the body, or an overall dissatisfaction with the appearance of the whole body (Grogan, 1999). Teenage boys tend to be more satisfied with their bodies than girls (Lunde et al., 2007). Females between the ages of 13 and 16 have been found to possess the highest levels of body dissatisfaction among any age group (Grogan, 1999). Feelings of body dissatisfaction are so common among this population that disliking one’s body is considered to be a normal part of life for teenage females (Irwin & Tucker, 2006; Lunde et al., 2007). Males may become more dissatisfied with their bodies between the ages of 13 and 15, corresponding to the time of pubertal growth (Lunde et al., 2007). For these males, a lack of muscular tissue has the greatest influence on body dissatisfaction (Carlson-Jones, 2004; Lunde et al., 2007).

As a result of body dissatisfaction, teenagers are prone to feelings of low self-esteem and depression (Carlson-Jones, 2004; Irwin & Tucker, 2006; Rigby, 1999). Feelings of body dissatisfaction in early adolescence predict body esteem as well as eating problems in the teenage years of females (Smolak, 2004). For the majority of females, body dissatisfaction is based on the weight of the individual (Carlson-Jones, 2004). There are steady decreases in body satisfaction when accompanied by an increase

in weight gain immediately following puberty (Smolak, 2004). Teenage girls generally believe that being slim and thin is the ideal, while being overweight and heavily muscular is 'inappropriately masculine' and unattractive (Grogan, 1999). For boys, puberty involves bodily changes associated with marked height and muscle increases as well as broadening of the shoulders (Lunde et al., 2007). Maturational timing influences body satisfaction as late maturing boys have been found to be more insecure about their bodies than early maturing boys (Lunde et al., 2007).

An important contributor to body dissatisfaction is social comparison (Carlson-Jones, 2004). It is defined as the "cognitive judgments that people make about their self-observation of their own attributes in comparison to others" (Irwin & Tucker, 2006, p.183). Social comparison results from peers and the media's message that defines self-worth in terms of one's appearance (Irwin & Tucker, 2006). More than teenage males, teenage females evaluate themselves against individuals they frequently see on fashion magazines, televisions, and movie screens and feel badly about how they compare to these ideals (Carlson-Jones, 2004; Smolak, 2004). Additionally, teenage females strive to be thin in the hope of appearing more attractive and receiving more attention from the opposite sex (Irwin & Tucker, 2006). For many females, being perceived as overweight and unattractive is a social liability where both popularity and status are lost as a result of an undervalued appearance (Thompson et al., 1999).

Body Image & Bullying

Among teenagers, verbal forms of bullying such as teasing and ridicule negatively affect body image (Cockburn & Clarke, 2002). Female teenagers are more likely to report being

teased about their appearance than males (Thompson et al., 1999). However, it has also been found that males internalize negative feedback about their appearance to a greater extent than do females (Lunde et al., 2007). Teasing about body weight has been consistently associated with lower levels of body satisfaction (Eisenberg & Neumark-Sztainer, 2003; Kumpulainen et al., 1998; Smolak, 2004). Classroom peers and friends are frequently the worst perpetrators of weight-based teasing (Smolak, 2004). Teasing from more than one source, for example, a peer and a friend, has been found to contribute to higher levels of body dissatisfaction than teasing from a single source (Eisenberg & Neumark-Sztainer, 2003). Similarly, the frequency of negative appearance-related feedback has been associated with higher levels of body dissatisfaction (Thompson et al., 1999). The more frequent the negative feedback about an individual's appearance, the more likely one is to experience feelings of body dissatisfaction. Males are likely to be bullied about being shorter in stature and smaller in muscle mass (Lunde et al., 2007). Females who are most likely to be bullied about their appearance in physical education class are visibly overweight, underweight, or overtly muscular (Grogan, 1999; Thompson et al., 1999). Females who are overweight tend to evaluate their appearance more negatively than others. This can be attributed to the societal belief that heavier body weights are undesirable for most and as such, have attached to them a negative stigmatization (Lunde et al., 2005).

As identified earlier, gym uniforms may add to body image concerns given that many areas of the body are seen and therefore have the potential to be judged by peers. The heightened awareness of one's physical appearance often occurs after being taunted

and teased about his or her look in a gym uniform (Dwyer et al., 2006b; Lenskyj & van Daalen, 2006). Differences in biological maturation levels and secondary sexual characteristics at this time are more apparent and are often the targets of hurtful teasing (Carney & Merrell, 2001). Nonverbal behaviours such as leering, looking, and gesturing are also forms of bullying that students face while wearing their gym uniforms (Flintoff & Scraton, 2005; Lenskyj & van Daalen, 2006).

Within cliques, female teenagers are highly sensitized to issues of the body (Smolak, 2004). When there is a high consensus among individuals in a classroom to evaluate the physical attractiveness of others, the foundation is laid for the development of negative body images (Thompson et al., 1999). Girls and boys who report frequent conversations with their friends about appearance also report greater body dissatisfaction (Carlson-Jones, 2004). Even subtle gestures, looks and laughs that carry appearance-based critiques can have a negative impact on an individual's body image (Thompson et al., 1999). Many begin to focus more on the appearance of their bodies and how it is negatively perceived by their peers.

In 2005, Lunde et al conducted a study among adolescent females and males to determine if various forms of bullying had any effect on body image. Surveys containing items regarding the frequency of peer victimization were distributed to students. It was found that social exclusion from peer groups was most influential on negative body image development among females (Lunde et al., 2005). Those who were regularly excluded from friendships and social activities had higher levels of body dissatisfaction than those who were included among classmates. Overweight females reported frequently

being excluded from fellow classmates, and believed that they were victimized due to their appearance (Lunde et al., 2005). As a result, the females who were heavier in weight tended to evaluate their appearance more negatively than the rest of the females in the study.

In 2007, Lunde et al followed up with the adolescent population they had studied earlier in 2005 to determine if there were any long-term associations between being bullied and body dissatisfaction. Those who were teased about their appearance had become significantly more dissatisfied with their body at age 13. From the self-reported survey data, it was also found that being bullied about one's appearance had long-term associations with body dissatisfaction among boys (Lunde et al., 2007). More specifically, the long-term associations dealt with a fear of how others viewed their appearance (Lunde et al., 2007). Receiving frequent negative remarks about appearance caused adolescents to question whether bullying would continue if they 'lost weight' or became 'more muscular' (Lunde et al., 2007).

In 1995, Cash conducted a study researching female college students and their recollections of teasing in adolescent and teenage years. Women who reported frequent experiences of appearance-based teasing during their youth currently reported more dissatisfaction with their bodies (Cash, 1995). Similarly in 1996, Rieves and Cash conducted a study among four-thousand female and male adults to determine what factors influenced their body image when they were young. Forty-four percent of women and 35% of men noted that being teased by others was a factor in shaping their body image. Many stated that the criticism they received about their body as a child continued to play

a role in the perceptions of their current body image (Rieves & Cash, 1996). It is therefore important to take into account how damaging incidences of bullying can be on the development of a healthy body image.

Body Image & Physical Education Participation

Those who possess positive feelings about their body image are more likely to continue participation in physical education classes (Martin & Lichtenberger, 2002). They are less likely to focus on their physical appearance. Instead these individuals focus on mastering the physical activity itself (Martin & Lichtenberger, 2002). Females who have a negative body image are more likely to cease their participation in physical education once they have acquired their single credit needed for graduation (Dwyer et al., 2006b). Conversely, males who dislike the appearance of their bodies may use activity and exercise to try to change its shape (Grogan, 1999). Although there is little literature relating body image and physical education participation, many studies discuss a link between a dislike of exercise and the possession of low body image (Dwyer et al., 2006b; Hills, 2006; Lenskyj & van Daalen, 2006). Since the body is so central in exercise and physical education class, those who are not satisfied with their appearance are less likely to continue participation (Cockburn & Clarke, 2002). Performing in front of others is a requirement of physical education. As such, the body becomes central to ridicule. Those who possess poor body image have expressed a dislike of performing in front of others because they fear the judgement of fellow classmates (Cockburn & Clarke, 2002).

Those who feel self-conscious about their appearance in physical education worry about how they will be evaluated by peers (Dwyer et al., 2006b). Females who are

dissatisfied with the appearance of their bodies feel apprehensive when fellow classmates, especially males, stare at them during activity in co-educational classes (Dwyer et al., 2006b). When a female becomes preoccupied with how others perceive her body in physical education, the level to which she enjoys the class begins to decrease (Cockburn & Clarke, 2002). As such, these individuals are likely to cease further participation in physical education when they are no longer enjoying their experience.

The decision to further physical education participation relates to concerns about the presentation of a changing body (Hills, 2007). Females who are overweight are most likely to drop out of physical education class for fear of being teased about their appearance in the future (Lenskyj & van Daalen, 2006). The same may be said for males who are short, extremely thin or overweight (Grogan, 1999). Many who have experienced appearance-based teasing in grade 9 physical education classes do not want to endure such ridicule in successive years (Dwyer et al., 2006b). As a result, the individual believes they are saving themselves from future harassment and criticisms by not furthering their participation in the class (Dwyer et al., 2006b; Hills, 2007). The hierarchy of what constitutes an 'attractive' appearance also decreases the confidence that teenagers have in their bodies, and further decreases their willingness to engage in physical activities (Hills, 2007). Although physical education class is a place where body image can be enhanced (Grogan, 1999), those who possess negative body images are likely to cease participation after it is no longer a requirement.

As students have not only cited being bullied about their physical appearance, but also their physical performance in physical education (Hills, 2007), the following section

will define physical competence. It will discuss the relation between physical competence, body image and physical education participation.

Physical Competence Defined

Intrinsic motivation is “behaviour engaged in for itself and for the pleasure and satisfaction derived from participation” (Vallerand, 2001, p.263). Perceived competence is a positive predictor of self-reported and behavioural measures of intrinsic motivation (Deci et al., 2008). Physical competence itself refers to “beliefs about one’s capabilities for specific physical tasks ([in addition to]) beliefs about one’s physical fitness and functioning in general” (Martin & Lichtenberger, 2002, p.416). High perceived physical competence facilitates expectations for success and behaviours such as persistence, effort and personal challenge (Bebetsos, 2007). Previous experiences in similar situations, feedback about those experiences and levels of difficulty allow one to form an assessment of physical competence (McKiddie & Maynard, 1997). At approximately age 12, adolescents are able to combine all of this information into an accurate appraisal of their physical competence (McKiddie & Maynard, 1997). Young teenagers rely more on peer comparison and peer evaluation to form such appraisals (McKiddie & Maynard, 1997). Fun is also highly associated with perceived competence (Humbert et al., 2006b). Feelings of competence are essential for students to have fun in any activity for which they are participating.

Physical Competence & Body Image

Physical activity significantly increases physical competence (Martin & Lichtenberger, 2002). This increase can result in more positive feelings about one's body and what it is able to accomplish. Feelings of physical competence and mastery of the body occur as a function of movement opportunities (Kearney-Cooke, 2002). Physical education has the ability to make individuals aware of their capabilities while reducing focus on physical appearance and body image (Martin & Lichtenberger, 2002). The more one is able to experiment with various activities such as dance, fitness and games, the more capable they will feel about their body and its abilities. These activities allow teenagers to experience their bodies as effective parts of themselves (Kearney-Cooke, 2002).

An individual with high physical competence is likely to view his or her own body as strong, healthy and coordinated (Kearney-Cooke, 2002). As body image satisfaction increases, so does competence in physical abilities (Asci et al., 1997). A study done by Cok in 1990 found that Turkish high school students who reported positive body images were more likely to participate in physical education programs at school. This finding was similar for both sexes (Cok, 1990). Those who are satisfied with their bodies are more confident in their physical abilities and are therefore more likely to continue participation in activity, sport and physical education (Asci et al., 1997).

Physical Competence, Bullying & Physical Education Participation

Competitive physical education serves to glorify the 'winners' and shame the 'losers' in a public way (Lenskyj & van Daalen, 2006). Negative feedback about physical competence

from peers and teachers decreases one's enjoyment of physical education class (Hills, 2007). Students who feel they are less able to complete a skill are more susceptible to bullying, teasing, and embarrassment in physical activity settings (Hills, 2007; Luke & Sinclair, 1991). Levels of coordination are often developing throughout the early teenage years, making differences in maturation exceedingly obvious to fellow classmates (Carney & Merrell, 2001). These students are bullied by others because they are seen as being incompetent in the athletic sense. As a result, those who are bullied continuously worry about their lack of skill, and go on to experience limited success in physical education class, leading them to drop out (Hills, 2007). In addition, these students are marginalized in that they are picked last during team games, further decreasing their enjoyment experiences in physical education class (Flintoff & Scraton, 2005).

Negative experiences in physical education class contribute to high levels of dropout in subsequent grade levels (Chernysh & Crossman, 1994; Sleap & Wormald, 2001; Bebetos, 2007). Those with negative perceptions of their competence in physical education make conscious decisions not to further their participation (Carroll & Loumidis, 2001). Teenagers who possess low levels of competence in their physical abilities are likely to lose interest in physical education because they feel inadequate when completing physical activities (Sleap & Wormald, 2001). When students do not succeed in completing a physical skill that is required of them, they lose confidence in their abilities and are discouraged from further participation in physical education classes. Feelings of inadequacy and incompetence are further compounded by teachers evaluating the physical skill levels of their students (Chernysh & Crossman, 1994). At often times,

students feel uncomfortable having their athletic skill evaluated by their teacher. The limited accomplishments that students may achieve in the class lead them to continuously worry about their lack of skill. These students will go on to experience limited success in physical education class, leading them to cease future participation (Hills, 2007).

Male students perceive themselves as more physically competent than do females (Carroll & Loumidis, 2001). Males are expected to be athletically inclined and be able to perform physical activities (Gibbons et al., 1999). They are to welcome competition amongst each other and the opportunity to dominate weaker groups (Bramham, 2003). When a mistake is made by a male student that signifies some sort of physical weakness, they are often labelled as a 'faggot' or 'queer' (Parker, 1996). Homosexuality is thereby equated with a lack of athletic prowess in males (Parker, 1996). As such, these students who do not perceive themselves as competent may drop out of physical education to evade the constant bullying that would follow them otherwise. Male students are also sensitive to the 'masculine gaze' when performing a task such as lifting weights (Bramham, 2003). They fear that they may not possess the strength or competence to lift the weight and complete it with proper physical form in front of other males (Bramham, 2003).

Limitations of the Literature

Although the existing literature on the definition of bullying is extensive, few studies have measured levels of bullying in secondary school physical education classes. More specifically, no studies have dealt with bullying exposure among secondary school students in Ontario. The majority of literature that was found in this review has

researched bullying exposure in school-based settings apart from physical education class. Studies that have measured bullying exposure within the school question incidents of bullying in the traditional classroom, during recess, and on the walk to-and-from school. No studies have researched bullying and its effect upon the decision to continue physical education participation among Ontario. It is the goal of this study to add to the existing knowledge base of bullying exposure in physical education class.

Similarly, there are many gaps in the literature in regards to body image and physical competence in physical education. This is especially true for males. Additionally, a small number of studies in the literature examined the relationship between bullying and body image as well as bullying and physical competence in physical education. This study will add to the existing literature on physical education as it intends to determine the prevalence of bullying in the class, its influence on the intention to take physical education in the future, while also examining the relationship between bullying, body image and physical competence among high school students in Ontario.

Restatement of Purpose

The purpose of the current study was to determine the prevalence of bullying in physical education and how it influences students' intention to take the class in the future. In particular, the study focused on recollections of participants' secondary school physical education experiences. The relationship between bullying and body image as well as bullying and physical competence in physical education were also analyzed. To gather the data, grade 10 physical education students were surveyed and reported how often they

experienced bullying and feelings of physical competence in the class. Additionally, participants completed a body image satisfaction measure in order to get a better indication of how these students perceive their body image.

Hypothesis

1) Since the participants of this study are grade 10 physical education students who have continued their participation and are not likely to have been extensively bullied in the class, the researcher believes that a small percentage of participating grade 10 physical education students will report being bullied in physical education.

2) Students who report higher frequencies of bullying in physical education will be less likely to intend to participate in the class in the future. Females will report higher frequencies of indirect bullying, while males will report higher frequencies of direct bullying in physical education.

3) Body image and physical competence will predict bullying behaviours in physical education. That is, those who are satisfied with their bodies are less likely to have been bullied in the class. Similarly, those who report physical competence are less likely to have been bullied in physical education.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

A cross-sectional, mixed method study was performed for this research. This chapter discusses the methods used in the completion of this research study. Topics addressed in this chapter include participants, procedures, instrumentation and data analysis.

Participants

Two-hundred and thirty-four students (144 female and 90 male) with an average age of 15.3 years participated in the study. The response rate of participants was 57.8% as 405 permission forms were distributed. Two different school boards gave ethical permission to participate. Of the 10 schools contacted to participate in the study, 8 agreed to be a part of the study. Four of the schools had same sex physical education classes while the other 4 utilized coeducation classes. The schools that employed same sex physical education classes were schools located in a large urban city. The schools that had coeducation classes were based more in smaller, rural-type communities. Approximately 85.9% reported taking a physical education class in grade 9. Eighty-nine percent of participants reported enjoying their time in physical education. Fun, staying fit, being with friends, participating in new activities and physical competence were cited as the major reasons why participants had enjoyed their experiences in physical education. Secondary school students were included in the study as they were the group that reported the highest prevalence of bullying (Pepler et al., 2006). Grade 10 students were chosen to participate in this study as they had recently experienced grade 9, the year where bullying is most prevalent (Pepler et al, 2006). For these students, recalling episodes of bullying that occurred in grade 9 would not be as difficult as students in grade 11 or 12 who may have

forgotten specific instances of bullying they had experienced. Physical education classes were selected because the purpose of the study was to determine the prevalence of bullying during the class.

Procedure

After permission was granted from the Brock Research Ethics Board (Appendix A) and respective school boards, the researcher contacted the principal from each high school where permission had been granted. After explaining the purpose of the study, each principal referred the researcher to the head of the physical education department. Approximately 19 grade 10 Physical Education classrooms from 8 secondary schools were visited. Dates and times were coordinated so that the grade 10 physical education classes would be available for recruitment. An introductory script (Appendix B) was verbally delivered to the classes that described the study, what participation entailed and the need for parental consent. An information letter (Appendix C) and consent form (Appendix D) were then distributed to each student in the class. The teacher collected the consent forms as they were completed over the next week. Upon receiving parental permission, each student was able to participate in the study when the researcher returned a week later.

A week after permission forms were given to grade 10 physical education classes, the researcher returned to each school to administer the surveys. Those that had parental permission to participate in the study were moved to an area separate from those who had not. A briefing script on what was to be completed during the survey (Appendix E) was delivered to those participating in the study. The survey (Appendix F) was then

administered to consenting participants with the researcher present. As per the request of one of the participating school boards, a youth counsellor was present at the time of survey administration. Grade 10 students were asked to recall their experiences in physical education from Kindergarten currently through grade 10. Completion of the survey took approximately 15 minutes. The researcher then collected the completed surveys and gave a brief discussion (Appendix E) on bullying, body image and where to look for resources on each topic.

Instrumentation

The survey package was compiled by the researcher to include measures of body dissatisfaction, exposure to bullying in physical education class, and physical competence during physical education (see Appendix F). The survey began by asking the participant to identify which physical education classes they have taken, they are currently taking, they plan to take, or which classes they would like to take but cannot fit into their timetable. To measure body dissatisfaction among grade ten students, the Contour Drawing Rating Scales (CDRS) were chosen for both genders (Thompson & Gray, 1995). Validity of the instrument was determined through a review of literature. Several studies rated the CDRS as having high test-retest reliability and validity measures among adolescent and teenage participants (Wertheim et al., 2004; Tiggemann & Wilson-Barrett, 1998). Each gendered scale consists of 9 numbered figures ranging from 1: thin to 9: overweight. To complete the scale, participants were asked to circle the letter that corresponded to the figure they felt best resembled their current figure. They also circled the letter that corresponded to the figure they felt best resembled their ideal figure.

The bullying exposure section of survey was developed from the Olweus' (1999) Bully/Victim Questionnaire (BVQ). The BVQ was chosen as its items were most representative of the various forms of bullying that occur among teenagers in school-based settings. This instrument was also validated by prior studies found in the literature and was determined to be one of the best methods for determining incidence rates of bullying among adolescents (Pellegrini et al., 1999; Austin & Joseph, 1996). The BVQ measures the frequency of bullying exposure based on the individual's retrospective recall. Consisting of two subscales, the BVQ measured 6 items regarding the frequency of indirect relational bullying and 8 items regarding direct physical and verbal bullying. The survey also included a physical competence scale consisting of 6 items. The physical competence items were derived from the Intrinsic Motivation Inventory Scale (Ryan, 1982). The scale has been validated by many studies in understanding the motivation of children during activity (McAuley et al., 1989).

Open-ended questions were placed at the end of the survey so that participants could describe their physical education experiences and further elaborate on any incidents of bullying that had occurred in physical education class. The first open-ended question asked the participant to state if they have enjoyed their experiences in physical education, and to explain why or why not. The remaining three open-ended questions asked the participants to describe situations where they were victimized in physical education.

After the original development of the instrument, a pilot study took place in which 10 expert judges rated the instrument to determine content validity. The judges consisted of three Brock faculty members, three secondary school teachers, and four Physical

Education and Kinesiology graduate students. On a Likert-scale ranging from '1: poor match' to '5: excellent match', judges were asked to rate how relevant each item was to experiences of bullying in physical education. Judges were also asked to give feedback on what items they felt were missing from instrument, as well as the relative ease of understanding and clarity of the items. Finally, an overall rating of how the survey represented bullying in physical education was also given by each judge. On a Likert-scale from "1: poor presentation" to "5: excellent representation, judges rated the representativeness of the survey.

After the data was collated, the mean and mode of each item were calculated (see Tables 1 & 2). Each item was found to have above average representation of bullying in physical education. The same conclusions were also found for the representativeness of the survey as a whole. Written feedback was also collated, and as a result, revisions were made to the wording of two of the items for ease of understanding purposes. Additionally, two more items were added to the survey based on similar comments made by over five judges. With one item based on the indirect scale of bullying, and the other based on the direct scale of bullying, both items dealt with being bullied on the basis of poor physical performances in physical education. The items were included based on the fact that activity is what makes physical education classes different from the rest of the subjects offered in school.

Data Analysis

The results of the completed surveys were coded into various categories in an Excel spreadsheet. Each school was assigned a number from 1 to 8 based on the order they

were visited chronologically. From each respective school, grade 10 physical education classrooms were assigned a number based on the number that participated in the school. Per school, this number of classes ranged from 1 to 3. Each participant was assigned a unique number based on the number of participants in the class. The age of each participant was recorded. Participants were further classified by gender.

Based on the chart on page 1 of the survey, participants indicated whether or not they planned on taking physical education in the future. The choices from which the participant could choose were: "You have completed; You are currently taking or are registered in; You plan on taking; You would like to take, but cannot due to timetable conflicts". The responses were coded as either 'intends to take physical education in the future' or 'does not plan to take physical education in the future'. The body image satisfaction scale consisted of 2 parts. Participants circled the letter that corresponded to the figure they felt currently resembled their body and also circled the letter that corresponded to the figure they viewed as their ideal body. These letters were recorded in separate columns and coded into corresponding numbers, where A=1, B=2, and so on. The numbers that corresponded to their current body image and their ideal body image were entered into SPSS. To get a representation of body satisfaction, the number that corresponded to the ideal body shape was subtracted from the number corresponding to their current body shape. For example, if the difference between the figures was -2, it signified that the participant was dissatisfied with their body and would like to be smaller in size. Conversely, if the difference between the two was +2, the participant was dissatisfied with the appearance of their body and wished to be larger.

Twenty items within the survey asked participants to circle the number that represented the frequency with which they were bullied and felt competent in physical education. These frequencies were entered as is and were based on a Likert-scale from '1- never' to '5- almost always'. The items fell into 3 categories and were grouped into the following: direct bullying, indirect bullying and physical competence. Items that were left blank or answered erroneously, for example 2 numbers circled for the same item were left blank in the spreadsheet. The data was later uploaded into the computer software program SPSS (version 16.0), where the means were analyzed to determine significance and correlation between the variables.

The open-ended questions found at the end of the survey were then coded into underlying themes. The researcher went through the first qualitative question that asked participants to identify if they had enjoyed their time in physical education and why. This question was utilized as a way to describe the sample. Based on the responses, enjoying physical education was coded as '1', not have enjoyed physical education was coded as '2', and a responses that indicated mixed feelings were coded as '3'.

An alternate coder was utilized to establish trustworthiness within the qualitative data. Trustworthiness works to persuade the reader that the study's findings are 'worth paying attention to' (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The criteria for trustworthiness consist of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. Credibility asks if the results are true and includes the criteria of prolonged engagement, triangulation and peer debriefing. Transferability is the extent to which the findings can be applied to other respondents and includes the criteria of thick description and purposive sampling.

Dependability is the ability to which the findings of the study can be replicated with similar respondents in similar contexts. The criteria for this include inquiry audit where an auditor examines the findings to support that they are supported by data. Finally, confirmability posits that the findings are the product of the data and not of the researcher. This includes having an auditor look at the raw data, analysis and instrument development (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The alternate coder used the themes generated by the researcher to recode the raw data. The alternate coder agreed with 93.5% of the original researcher's coding. Discrepancies were settled through discussion of interpretations.

The same analysis was completed for the 3 other open-ended questions that asked for specific instances of being physical, social and verbal bullied in physical education. Again, those responses that were answered as 'yes' were coded as '1', and those answered to as 'no' were coded as '2'. Each question was then analyzed into overlying themes.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

The following chapter will explain the results of the statistical and qualitative data analyses. More specifically, the results will be presented under the following headings: *The Prevalence of Bullying in Physical Education; The Influence of Bullying on the Intention to take Physical Education in the Future; The Relationship Between Bullying, Body Image and Physical Competence*. Finally, the emergent themes found in the open-ended questions dealing with enjoyment will also be included at the end of this chapter.

The Prevalence of Bullying in Physical Education

One-hundred and forty-two of the study's participants (60.7%) responded to the open-ended question that asked them to report physical bullying. Of that number, 86 were female and 56 were male. Twenty-six participants (16 female and 10 male) or 18.3% identified that they had been physically bullied in physical education class. Respondents identified being physically bullied in the following ways: hit, shoved, kicked and having had objects thrown at them. From 23 comments that discussed physical bullying in physical education, 2 themes emerged that explained why participants felt bullying took place in the class: joking around and physicality being a part of physical education. For example, some respondents commented that they felt their peers were joking around when they were bullied against: "When anyone kicked or shoved me, it was just me and my friends joking around". However, some participants cited that they wanted the behaviour to cease even if it was only thought of as a joke: "If I have ever been pushed in physical education it was a joke, but sometimes it gets to the point where I want it to stop". Other participants identified being hit or kicked as a part of physical education:

“The only time anyone has ever hit me or anything was if we were competing in a sport which is cool”.

Verbal bullying in physical education is known as a direct form of bullying because it includes mocking, teasing and yelling in the face of the individual being bullied (Carney & Merrell, 2001). One-hundred and thirty-five of the study's participants answered the question pertaining to verbal bullying in physical education. Of that, 86 were female and 49 were male. A total of 32 individuals (22 female and 10 male), or 23.7% of those who answered the question experienced verbal bullying in physical education. Of the 26 comments that participants gave as descriptions of verbal bullying in physical education, all cited mocking as the type of verbal bullying they had experienced. Skill level was the most common reason given as to why participants were verbally bullied. The following comment illustrated this: “People said that I sucked at a sport”. Conversely, some cited high levels of skill as the reason why they were bullied: “People would mock me in gym class because I was good at most activities”. Participants stated that their appearance was also ridiculed in physical education: “The worst thing was being called ‘thunder thighs’”; “I am flat-chested, so they called me a ‘table top’”. A female participant also stated that she had been ridiculed in the change room: “A classmate called me ‘fat’ in the change room”.

Social bullying includes exclusion, gossiping and manipulation (Pepler et al., 2004). As such, it is labelled as indirect bullying because it is not physical in nature and often goes on without the bullied person knowing. A total of 147 participants completed this question on the survey. Of those, 93 were female (63.3%) and 54 were male (36.7%).

Twenty-seven females and 3 males, approximately 20.4% of those who answered this question indicated that they had been socially bullied in physical education. Of the 23 comments that gave descriptions of social bullying experiences in the class, two forms were cited: exclusion and gossiping. Skill level was the only reason given for being excluded and gossiped about. The following comments illustrated this: "Every time when they have to choose teams and pick people, they would pick me last. Whenever I would let them down they would start whispering behind my back". Similarly, females stated a divide between athletic and non-athletic classmates: "Sometimes the athletic girls group get together so that a few of us are left out. It's not really isolation, but it ends up feeling like it".

The Influence of Bullying on the Intention to take Physical Education in the Future

A 2 (Gender) by 2 (Future Physical Education Participation) ANOVA was conducted to explore mean difference in levels of Direct and Indirect Bullying. An ANOVA assumes that the values of each variable will follow a normal curve and a linear relationship between the variables exists. Furthermore, an ANOVA also assumes that the standard deviation and variances of each group are equal (Monday et al., 2005). Finally, the ANOVA assumes that the errors associated with each observation are independent (Monday et al., 2005). No significance ($p > .05$) was found for the interaction. However, there were separate between subject effects for Gender and Future Physical Education Participation. For Gender, between subject effects were found for Indirect Bullying. Female participants reported significantly ($p < .05$) higher frequencies of Indirect Bullying in physical education compared to males. There were no significant ($p > .05$)

gender differences found for Direct Bullying. For intention to take physical education in the future, those who did not intend to take the class in the future reported significantly higher levels of both Direct ($p < .05$) and Indirect ($p < .05$) Bullying (see Table 3).

The Relationship between Bullying, Body Image and Physical Competence

To determine the relationship between bullying and body image as well as bullying and physical competence in physical education, four multiple regressions were conducted. The means and standard deviations for each dependent variable can be found in Table 8. For the variables of Direct and Indirect Bullying, the rating scales were between 1 and 5. In the case of both variables, the means are on the low end of the scale. In comparing females and males, the means for Direct Bullying are similar in value while the females have a distinctly higher mean for Indirect Bullying than do males. The rating scale for Physical Competence was also between 1 and 5, with the mean values at the higher end of the scale. Male participants have higher mean values for Physical Competence than do the females. Finally, the rating scale for Body Dissatisfaction was between 0 and 8 as the discrepancy value from the CDRS was inputted into SPSS. There is a large difference in the mean values between genders, with males being more satisfied with their bodies than are females. The means found within this table are in the expected directions, providing evidence that the stated hypotheses are appropriate.

Multiple regression is a way of predicting a dependent variable based on the values of one or more independent variables (Vincent, 2005). Multiple regressions also determine the relationship between the variables. The first regression had independent variables of female body dissatisfaction and female physical competence with the

dependent variable being direct bullying (see Table 4). Female body dissatisfaction did not significantly ($p > .05$) predict direct forms of bullying in physical education for females. However, female physical competence did significantly ($p < .05$) predict direct forms of bullying in physical education for females. The second regression had independent variables of female body dissatisfaction and female physical competence with the dependent variable being indirect bullying (see Table 5). Female body dissatisfaction did not significantly ($p > .05$) predict indirect forms of bullying in physical education for females. However, female physical competence did significantly ($p < .05$) predict indirect forms of bullying in physical education for females.

The third regression had the independent variables of male body dissatisfaction and male physical competence with the dependent variable being direct bullying (see Table 6). Male body dissatisfaction did not significantly ($p > .05$) predict direct forms of bullying in physical education for males. However, male physical competence did significantly ($p < .05$) predict direct forms of bullying in physical education for males. The fourth regression had the independent variables of male body dissatisfaction and male physical competence with the dependent variable being indirect bullying (see Table 7). Male body dissatisfaction did not significantly ($p > .05$) predict indirect forms of bullying in physical education for males. However, male physical competence did significantly ($p < .05$) predict indirect forms of bullying in physical education for males.

Emergent Themes Contributing to Enjoyment in Physical Education

From the 234 participants in the study, 222 answered the open-ended question that asked respondents to identify if they have enjoyed their experiences in physical education and

to explain why or why not. Of this number, 138 were female (62.2%) and 84 were male (37.8%). The question asked respondents to identify if they have enjoyed their experiences in physical education thus far and to further explain why or why not. One-hundred and ninety-nine (89.6%) respondents stated that they had enjoyed their experiences in physical education up to the time the study took place. Eight (3.6%) respondents stated that they had not enjoyed their experiences in physical education. Fifteen (6.8%) respondents claimed that they have mixed feelings about physical education, explaining both positive and negative experiences they have had during the class.

Three-hundred and sixty-three qualitative comments were coded for having enjoyed physical education (see Table 8), as it was possible for a comment to be placed into more than 1 overlying theme. For example, a participant stating they enjoyed physical education because of the activities performed during the class as well as because of their teacher would be coded into 2 themes.

Fun was the factor most often reported (24%). Like competence, fun is a positive predictor of intrinsic motivation (Deci et al., 2008). As suggested by the following comment, fun led many participants to want to take physical education after grade 9: "I enjoy physical education because it is fun, I love to run and play games, so I took it again in grade 10". Fun was also reported in physical education because many participants did not take part in activity outside of school. The following comment illustrates that point: "I do enjoy physical education because I don't get to exercise at home much. So it is a fun experience for me".

The second most commonly reported theme that added to enjoyment in physical education was being able to exercise to remain or get fit (20.4%). Using physical education as a way of getting in shape was cited multiple times in the following manner: "I enjoy doing gym because it helps get me in shape". This factor was repeated multiple times in the following comment: "I enjoy physical education because of the fitness and well-being it gives. I enjoy being healthy and staying fit." Likewise, many participants stated that they have been able to increase their stamina and strength from participation in physical education: "I am loving it because I'm getting stronger". Adding to this was the third most commonly cited factor influencing enjoyment in physical education, being with friends (16%). This theme was stated in the following comment: "Gym keeps me in shape and allows me to be with most of my friends". Many participants also stated that physical education class allowed them to make new friends: "I enjoy physical education class because it helps build trust with others who may not be a friend".

Learning new activities during the class were reported by 15.1% as having added enjoyment to physical education. The following comment illustrates this: "I enjoy physical education because we get to learn different abilities and skills for new sports". Additionally, these activities encouraged further participation in physical education: "I enjoyed and am currently enjoying physical education because the activities make the class very enjoyable and motivate me to always participate".

Being physically competent was seen as adding enjoyment to physical education by 10.7% of respondents. A participant illustrated this through the following comment: "I have enjoyed my experiences in physical education because I'm capable of most

activities presented by the teacher". Since many that continue with physical education after grade 9 are athletic, many participants stated that their abilities added to the enjoyment of the class: "I really enjoy being in physical education because I'm a really athletic person". Some stated their participation in extra-curricular sport aided in their competence: "I am the captain of the rowing team. I am always looking to make myself a more controlled athlete".

Combined, the themes of fun, participating in new activities, fitness, being with friends and competence represented a total of 86.3% of all comments. Other minor themes that emerged from the comments were: physical education being seen as a different from traditional classes (e.g., "It is an easy class, instead of sitting at a desk and beginning to fidget, in gym you can run and burn energy" – 5.5%); not being bullied (e.g., "I enjoyed grade 9 physical education because no bullying went on. No one was intentionally hurt in our class" – 4.7%); good teaching (e.g., "I like our teacher, he makes more people want to participate – 2.2%); and competition between students (e.g., "I love doing physical education as I love the competitiveness – 1.4%).

Of the 30 comments coded for not having enjoyed physical education (see Table 9), the most common theme was incompetence (33.3%). This factor was presented by many with statements such as the following: "I don't really enjoy it because I'm not really good at many sports, I feel out of place from everyone". Similarly, one participant wrote about the feelings that stemmed from her lack of skill: "The difference between what I can do and what the athletes in my class can do is embarrassing for me". The second most prevalent factor cited as leading to a lack of enjoyment in physical education

was bullying (23.3%). Being bullied was voiced in the following comment: “I did not enjoy gym class because I always felt people were talking about me in a negative way”. Another respondent did not enjoy seeing other classmates bullied in the class: “Sometimes I don’t like physical education because of how they mock other classmates”.

Incompetence and bullying accounted for 56.6% of all comments contributing to not having enjoyed physical education. Other themes that were found in the comments were: fitness testing (e.g., “I did not enjoy some components of fitness testing and how you could not pick your best mark of the three times you had to do it” – 10%); competition (e.g., “Personally I don’t really like gym, I feel sometimes people get too competitive” – 10%); and other (23.3%) such as physical education being unimportant, not being with friends, a dislike of health class, a dislike of the activities and disruptive classmates.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

The following chapter will discuss the results of the current research study and compare them to results found in previous similar studies. The chapter will also address the implications and limitations of the current study.

The Prevalence of Bullying in Physical Education

This study was designed to create an understanding about the prevalence of bullying in physical education and its influence on students' intention to take the class in the future. Physical education is a highly beneficial class promoting healthy behaviours for Canadian teenagers who have been found to be extremely inactive in recent years (Koezuka et al., 2006). Unfortunately, approximately 50% of teenagers in Ontario will not continue with the class after achieving one physical education credit, usually in grade 9 (Dwyer et al., 2006a). Approximately 18.3% of those respondents who answered the open-ended question cited that they had been physically bullied in physical education. With respect to verbal bullying, 23.7% stated that they had experienced it in physical education, and 20.4% reported that they experienced social bullying in physical education. These numbers are much higher than anticipated as 85.9% of the participants included in this study have chosen to take physical education beyond the single credit required for graduation. As 15%-20% of all students will experience bullying during their school career (Batsche, 1997), the percentages of bullying reported in this study are extremely high.

Craig et al (2000) conducted a study that investigated where bullying incidents happen most at school. It was found that the majority of bullying episodes occur outside of the classroom where teacher supervision is minimal, such as on the walk or bus ride to and from school, as well as at lunch or recess times (Craig et al., 2000). Therefore it is alarming that so many students in this study reported being bullied in physical education.

The relationship between gender and future intention to take physical education was also investigated in the data analysis. With the interaction of gender and future intention to take physical education not being statistically significant, these 2 factors were found to be independent of each other.

Differences between genders and their experiences with bullying in physical education were analyzed. For the purpose of this research, direct bullying included such behaviours as physical violence and verbal aggressions (Harris & Petrie, 2003). The study found no significant differences between the two genders in their reported frequencies of direct bullying in physical education, similar to recent findings. Much of past literature has stated that physical bullying such as kicking and punching is most prevalent among males (Harris & Petrie, 2003), however, physical bullying is now a growing concern among females (Shariff, 2008). Similar to the existent literature, respondents identified physical bullying as hitting, shoving, kicking and deliberating having objects thrown at them. The only type of verbal bullying having been experienced by the participants in this study was mocking. Participants reported that they were mocked about their appearance and performance in physical education. A considerable amount of research suggests that these two characteristics are the most frequently

targeted by bullies in physical education (Cockburn & Clarke, 2002; Hills, 2007). Most participants stated that they were teased about poor performances during the class. Interestingly, some participants reported that they were bullied because of strong athletic performances. Flintoff and Scraton (2005) have illustrated that athletes are often mocked in physical education, with the females being branded 'lesbians' and the males being branded 'meatheads'. Most likened these behaviours to joking around with classmates. However, individuals who are being bullied may not interpret this in the same way. Feelings of embarrassment and identity challenge can present themselves to the target of the tease or punch (Kowalski, 2000).

The results of the study showed that females reported significantly higher frequencies of indirect bullying than males in physical education. Indirect bullying, also known as relational aggression, includes behaviours such as acts of exclusion, gossiping and relational manipulations. Similar to the literature (Crothers & Levinson, 2004; Cockburn & Clarke, 2002), this study found that females were more likely than males to experience indirect bullying in physical education. There were two forms of this behaviour found in physical education classes: exclusion and gossiping. All of those who reported indirect bullying were either gossiped about or excluded from group activities due to a lack of skill. This included being picked last for team games, a common occurrence for females who are less skilled in physical education (Flintoff & Scraton, 2005). Marginalizing individuals based on their lack of skill alienates them from the rest of the class (Hills, 2007).

The Influence of Bullying on the Intention to take Physical Education in the Future

Determining how bullying ultimately influenced the intention to take physical education in the future was one of the purposes of this study. Bullying behaviours (both direct and indirect) were found to deter male and female participants from future physical education participation. Girls who are bullied often fear going to school and are at an increased risk of truancy and dropping out (Carney & Merrell, 2001). Similarly, boys who are often bullied about not meeting the standards of hegemonic masculinity in physical education are at an increased risk of ceasing their participation in the class (Bramham, 2003). For both genders, those reporting significantly higher frequencies of being bullied in physical education did not intend to take physical education in the future. Those who are bullied in physical education often feel uncomfortable and apprehensive about attending future classes in fear they will endure more humiliation (Carney & Merrell, 2001). Their apprehension is intensified when they are frequently mocked and excluded by peers due to their performance in the class (Hills, 2007). As a result, those experiencing frequent bullying in physical education do not intend on taking the class in the future compared to those who do not experience such behaviour.

The Relationship between Bullying, Body Image and Physical Competence

The relationship between body image and bullying was not found to be significant in this study. That is, body dissatisfaction, which acted as a measure of body image, did not predict bullying behaviours (both direct and indirect) for either gender. This is contrary to what has been found in the literature. Previous literature has reported that those who feel dissatisfied with their bodies are more likely to have been bullied in physical education

(Kumpulainen et al., 1998; Eisenberg & Neumark-Sztainer, 2003). As the body is so central in physical education, (Cockburn & Clarke, 2002), one would assume that body dissatisfaction predicts being bullied in the class. The hierarchy of desirable body types influences what certain classmates deem 'attractive' (Hills, 2007) and leaves individuals feeling humiliated and embarrassed about their body when they do not meet that standard (Irwin & Tucker, 2006). Previous research conducted by Lenskyj and van Daalen (2006) reported that peer groups often bully those who do not meet the set 'ideal' by gesturing and laughing at them. For example, teenage males who are smaller in stature, that is, they do not possess an increase in height or muscle mass are more insecure about their bodies (Lunde et al., 2007). These feelings of insecurity are compounded as males are likely to experience greater dissatisfaction with their bodies when they are bullied (Lunde et al., 2007).

A potential explanation for this finding would be that individuals who participate in physical education beyond grade 9 possess already a positive body image. As participants were grade 10 physical education students, they were likely the most athletic of their grade and truly enjoy their time in physical education. This finding is represented in the results of a study conducted by Asci et al (1997), where it was found that females reporting higher satisfaction with their bodies were more likely to continue participation in physical education. This finding was also found by Cok (1990), who stated that individuals possessing higher body satisfaction are more likely to continue participation in physical education programs at school. Individuals who are satisfied with their bodies

are more likely to focus on mastering the physical skill instead of focusing on the appearance of their bodies (Martin & Lichtenberger, 2002).

Being with friends was the third most common reason given as to why participants enjoyed physical education. Cash conducted a study in 1995 among female college students that reported one-third of all teasing was done by friends. Friends however, were not regarded as the 'worst offenders', instead classmates and in particularly males, held the label. This finding could relate to the current study in that although bullying about bodily appearance and performance does take place in physical education, it is often not taken seriously and seen as a joke.

Furthermore, it could be that bullying about body image and physical performances does not take place in physical education. Instead, body dissatisfaction occurred among participants as a result of social comparison. Teenagers are constantly comparing their bodies to those of peers, celebrities and models, leading them to devalue their appearance and abilities. Social comparison theory states that individuals are constantly engaging in self-evaluations that allow for the formation of negative beliefs about one's body and abilities (Thompson et al., 1999). As body dissatisfaction was found among female participants, this theory could explain why body image did not predict bullying in physical education.

The analysis then revealed the relationship between physical competence and bullying in physical education to be significant. That is, physical competence significantly predicted being bullied (both direct and indirect) for both genders. In this study, physical competence referred to one's beliefs about their capabilities for specific

physical tasks (Martin & Lichtenberger, 2002). These results showed that participants with low physical competence experienced significantly more bullying than those with higher physical competence in the class. This finding is consistent with the current literature. Both male and female students who feel they are not physically competent enough to complete skills in physical education are more susceptible to bullying behaviours such as exclusion and mocking from peers in their class (Luke & Sinclair, 1991; Hills, 2007). Poor performances in physical education often lead to public evaluations of competence including taunting and teasing (Hills, 2007). For males especially, being physically competent in physical education and sport is an attribute that is deemed as highly desirable (Gibbons et al., 1999). Those who are not physically competent in physical education are most often excluded from team games and marginalized in that they are chosen last when picking teams (Flintoff & Scraton, 2005).

The results of the qualitative question investigating enjoyment in physical education classes were also consistent with current literature. Fun was reported as the number one reason why participants enjoyed their time in the class. Fun is highly related to physical competence and the activities performed in physical education. Competence was also cited as a reason why participants enjoyed physical education. For example, if a student perceives themselves as being good at an activity, then they are likely to perceive that activity as being fun (Humbert et al., 2006b). Conversely, those who do not succeed at an activity are less likely to perceive it as being fun. Therefore the physical activities that are completed during the class play a large role in determining what constitutes fun for the student. Related to this were the individuals who stated their enjoyment in

physical education stemmed from the activities that were learned and performed in the class. Activity selection within physical education programs has often been found to discourage future participation because of its offering of traditional and competitive sports (Dwyer et al., 2006b). However, competition was reported by some participants as a source of enjoyment in physical education. Since many participants of the study were grade 10 students deciding to continue their participation after grade 9, they have most likely enjoyed this sort of activity in the past.

Staying fit was the second most common reason given for enjoyment in physical education classes. With the body being so central among individuals in this age group, many use the class to keep fit and stay active. Many females strive for the 'ideal' of being thin. Grogan (1999) states that males use activity and exercise as a way to change their current body shape. Physical education classes can provide an environment for teenagers to be active amongst friends. Being with friends in class was cited as the third most common reason as to why participants enjoyed their time in physical education. The majority of students want to be in physical education class with their friends so that they can have a more comfortable experience (Humbert, 2006a). Being with friends in the class also reduces the likelihood of feeling left out during activity and the fear of being bullied. Similarly, not having been bullied in physical education was cited for adding enjoyment to the class. Some participants reported feeling safe from humiliation when they were with friends in physical education. As bullying has been cited as a deterrent from future physical education participation (Cockburn & Clarke, 2002), not being bullied adds to the overall enjoyment of the class.

Teachers were reported as individuals adding enjoyment to the physical education experience. A research study conducted by Chernysh and Crossman (1994) found that students possessing a positive rapport with their physical education teachers were more likely to have a positive experience in the class than those who did not. The student-teacher relationship therefore does influence enjoyment in physical education for students. Finally, the very structure of physical education was cited as a source of enjoyment for some participants. More specifically, participants enjoyed how physical education was different from other classes in that they did not have to sit down for the entire period, take notes or be assigned homework. Although the majority of participants reported enjoying their time in physical education, the results indicate that for some, factors such as bullying, body image and physical competence may have a more significant impact on intention to take physical education in the future.

Implications of Research Findings

The results of this study impact the physical education programs of Ontario schools. As stated by the Ontario Ministry of Education and Training (1999), physical education in secondary students will develop:

“...an understanding of the importance of physical fitness, health, and well-being and the factors that contribute to them; a personal commitment to daily vigorous physical activity and positive health behaviours; [(and)] the skills and knowledge they require to participate in physical activities throughout their lives” (p.2).

Although these may be the goals of the physical education curriculum, they are often not achieved as close to 50% of individuals will not partake in more than 1 class throughout their high school career (Dwyer et al., 2006a). Health and physical education teachers have the opportunity to develop these critical life skills that make a positive life-long impact on the students in their classes (Tallon, 2008).

Bullying behaviours influence students' intention to take physical education in the future. Physical education was found to be a location where bullying occurred frequently during school. As such, the physical education curriculum of elementary and secondary schools should be revised to include a development strand presenting the ways in which youth can build positive social relationships. The grades 9 and 10 physical education curriculum states the focuses of classes in those years are on "positive, responsible personal and social behaviour in physical activity settings [(and)] encouraging students to make safe and wise choices" (Ontario Ministry of Education and Training, 1999, p.4). Although important, it is imperative that positive interactions between classmates be introduced and reinforced at a young age. It would also be beneficial to include coping strategies for students who continue to be bullied. In this way, some may be able to deflect any negative effects of the behaviour.

The topics covered in the current *Healthy Living* strand of the grades 9 and 10 curriculum are: 'healthy growth and sexuality', 'substance use and abuse', 'personal safety and injury prevention, and 'healthy eating' (Ministry of Education and Training, 1999). Although not found to be significant in this study, the normalcy of a changing body must be stressed by teachers in students of this age group. Coupled with the

influences of peer and celebrity comparison, this strand should include factors that affect body image and what can be done to promote healthy body beliefs and behaviours. Furthermore, education around changing sexualities and anti-homophobia would benefit adolescent and teenage populations. In this way many could develop an understanding and respect for all sexualities. This form of education has the ability to decrease harassment and discrimination within physical education while promoting inclusivity.

As physical competence was found to influence bullying behaviours in physical education, the development of basic skills and personal goal setting must be addressed in the curriculum at a young age. Previously stated in the curriculum goals was the need for students to develop the skills required to participate in physical activities throughout their lives (Ontario Ministry of Education and Training, 1999). Fundamental movement skills should be taught and reinforced early in the physical education experience for youth to develop competence in the class. Instead of competitive sport and activity where physical and verbal aggression often takes place, working to achieve personal fitness goals is important in experiencing feelings of success and accomplishment. By placing students in situations where they can thrive while achieving their personal best, situations where bullying can happen in physical education will decrease as students can become more physically competent. This has the potential to lead to more students participating in the class beyond the single secondary credit as they experience greater successes. Teachers must also enhance the physical education experience by presenting positive feedback to students when achievements are made in the class. As previously stated, feedback that is given in response to skills performed allow one to form an assessment of physical

competence (McKiddie & Maynard, 1997). Positive feedback often enhances feelings of physical competence, facilitating further participation and expectations for success (Bebetsos, 2007).

Limitations and Future Research

The current study utilized a mixed-method design for data collection. Participants were asked to recall their experiences in physical education from the earliest age they could remember and report them in the survey. This presents problems in that recollections may not have been accurate and some may not have been *able* to recall specific episodes of for example, being bullied. However, since qualitative questions were included in the survey, they were used as confirmation and support of the quantitative responses. As this study was cross-sectional in nature, it was also limited by this design. Cross-sectional studies assume that all of the parameters measured remain constant over a set period of time (Bowen & Wiersema, 1999). For example, one who reported feelings of incompetence during physical education class was assumed to have these feelings throughout their entire experience in the class. Additionally, how individuals perceived their body image was flawed in that feelings of body dissatisfaction are likely to have developed over recent years. Future studies would therefore benefit from having longitudinal designs. For example, a study researching factors influencing future physical education participation would benefit from starting their data collection in a group of grade 8 students and following them through to the end of their grade 9 year. The researchers could then take multiple measurements of the experiences of these factors up until the end of grade 9. This longitudinal data would be a better representation of how experiencing certain

factors over a measured time period ultimately influence students' decision to further their participation in physical education.

The survey instrument used to collect data in this study was a limiting factor. The qualitative questions found within the survey could be seen as leading participants to report high frequencies of bullying. These questions gave specific examples of bullying situations in physical education that could have swayed the participants to recall instances similar to those mentioned. Additionally, if a participant reported an instance of bullying that was only thought of to be 'a joke' to them, it was coded by the researcher as experiencing bullying in physical education. This could have led to higher reported levels of bullying in the class. Although the survey was based on Olweus' (1999) Bully/Victim Questionnaire, the instrument used in this research only utilized the victim portion. That is, the study was concerned with how the experience of being bullied influenced physical education participation. Realistically, the researcher could have made use of the Bully aspect of the questionnaire to examine if those who are doing the bullying choose to take physical education in the future. Limitations may have stemmed from the representativeness of the items utilized. For example, participants may not have experienced the forms of bullying included in the items of the survey. Similarly, some may have experienced forms of bullying that were not included in the items of the survey. The qualitative questions at the end of the instrument worked to provide a space where participants could elaborate on any type of bullying that was not included in the survey.

Trustworthiness of the qualitative data results are a limitation of the study. The analysis of the qualitative portion of the study only met two of the four criteria needed to

establish trustworthiness. Under the criteria of credibility, prolonged engagement was not met. The researcher only came into each classroom twice, once to hand out the parental permission form and once to get participants to fill out the survey. Therefore the researcher is unaware of any unusual or seasonal effects that may have occurred in each classroom. Thick description under the criteria for transferability was not met as observational data was not taken the researcher. This could have allowed the audience a better understanding of bullying by reading what the researcher viewed acts of direct and indirect bullying to be. The criterion of dependability was met as an external auditor reviewed the qualitative data and the thesis supervisor reviewed the quantitative data collected. Finally, the confirmability portion of trustworthiness was met as a panel of judges validated the survey instrument. In relation to the measure of body satisfaction, the scale utilized could also be viewed as a limitation of the study. Although the scale is quite simplistic, it was so that participants could easily decipher between which figures they perceive as their own and which could be perceived as their ideal body shape. However, it was limiting in that some may not be able to find a figure that they feel is representative of their body. The way in which the instructions were worded made it seem that there has to be a difference between current and ideal body shapes. For the most part, females wished to be smaller in size. For males, a problem exists where the data is often bimodal. That is, many would like to be larger in stature and gain muscle mass, while many others would like to lose weight and be smaller in size. This presents problems for the data analysis as any significant data in one group may be cancelled out by the other. Future studies should be more comprehensive in their measurement of body image, including multiple measures.

Finally, as participants of the study were already taking grade 10 physical education classes, this was a limiting factor to the study. Upon submitting applications to school boards for ethical clearance, the classes that were granted permission were those of grade 10 physical education. The reason for this decision was based on the premise that the study dealt with this class specifically. Since the researcher felt that grade 9 students would not have all completed a physical education class and many others would have just started in the current semester, the decision was made to survey grade 10 physical education students. As a result, the data collected in this study is not fully representative of all grade 10 students as those who dropped out after grade 9 were not surveyed. Therefore higher frequencies of bullying, body dissatisfaction and physical incompetence might have occurred than the results of this study have reported. Future studies would benefit from surveying participants in grade 10 math and English classes because physical education participants and those who did not choose to further their participation would both be in the classes, allowing for comparison between the 2 groups to be possible.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to examine the prevalence of bullying and its influence on future physical education participation among secondary students. Direct and indirect forms of bullying were found to be prevalent in physical education classes. Results showed that those who reported being frequently bullied in physical education did not intend on taking the class in the future. Body image was not found to predict bullying behaviours in physical education. Finally, physical competence was found to predict

bullying behaviours in physical education. That is, those who possessed low physical competence were more likely to experience both direct and indirect bullying in the class.

These results can be utilized by health promoting agencies and physical educators across the country. Since bullying was found to largely impact physical education participation, it would be beneficial for the curriculum to focus on the building of positive social relationships at a young age. In this way, fewer bullying behaviours would be experienced in physical education, making the environment more comfortable for students. Strategies should also be introduced that teach students how to deflect any negative effects that may stem from being bullied. Similarly, changes in body size and sexuality should be reinforced in adolescence through the teenage years to assert the normalcy of pubertal and sexual development. This will help with any body image concerns that arise in grade 9 physical education. Additionally, the importance of teaching fundamental movement skills should be stressed in the elementary school curriculum. Movement opportunities often lead to feelings of physical competence and mastery of body functions. (Kearney-Cooke, 2002). Activities that allow for the attainment of personal fitness goals while focusing less on competition are sure to enhance the time spent in physical education classes.

Most of the previous research in this area has examined the prevalence of bullying in school, not within physical education classes. As such, this study is novel in that it allows educators to realize the pervasiveness of bullying in physical education and its impact on future physical education participation. Prevention strategies about bullying, body dissatisfaction and physical incompetence must be incorporated into the curriculum

and teachings of health educators so that fewer students experience a dislike of activity and exercise at such an early age. Physical education has the ability to foster in students the enjoyment of activity and a lifelong commitment to exercise. The major issue at the centre of this research study is the level of inactivity found amongst secondary school students. The purpose of this research is to try to curb those levels by providing some information on what is influencing its prevalence in Ontario. It is the hope of the researcher that the results found in this study will help inspire in students and physical education teachers a renewed commitment to lifelong activity.

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*Table 1.**Mean and Mode of Each Item*

Question Number	Mean	Mode
1- Classmates called you mean names because of how you looked in your gym uniform.	4.2	5
2- Classmates snickered or laughed at how you looked in your gym uniform in front of peers in your physical education class.	4.3	5
3- You felt like you were being left out on purpose when you and your peers participated in physical activities.	4	5
4- When you tried to talk to a fellow classmate, you felt like you were being ignored or not listened on purpose.	4	5
5- You felt like you didn't have any friends to talk to in your physical education class because you were left out.	3.8	3
6- You overheard your fellow classmates gossiping about you behind your back in physical education class.	4.7	5
7- Your fellow classmates spread mean rumours about you in physical education class so that others would dislike you.	4.8	5
8- Classmates told you that they disliked or hated you in physical education class and that upset you.	4.6	5
9- You were pushed or shoved intentionally by one of your fellow classmates in physical education class.	4.8	5
10- You were intentionally kicked, punched or hit by one of your fellow classmates in physical education class.	4.7	5
11- A fellow classmate threatened to hurt you physically while you were in physical education class.	4.8	5
12- You were scared or worried to attend your physical education class because you felt you were going to be bullied by peers.	4.7	5

Table 2.

Content Representation of Survey

Question	Average	Descriptor
1. How well do you feel all of the questions represent bullying in physical education?	4.7	Excellent representation
2. Are the items appropriate in that they represent how students may be bullied in physical education?	4.5	Absolutely
3. Are there any additional items that you feel might better represent how students are bullied in physical education?	1.8	Yes
4. Are there any other items that you feel measure more than just how students are bullied in physical education?	1.3	No

*Table 3.**Between Group Differences for Forms of Bullying*

Groups	<i>Df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Gender			
Direct Bullying	1	1.42	.236
Indirect Bullying	1	4.40	.037
Plan to Take PE			
Direct Bullying	1	14.55	<.001
Indirect Bullying	1	10.12	<.001
Gender x Plan to Take PE			
Direct Bullying	1	.002	.966
Indirect Bullying	1	.469	.494

Table 4.

Summary of multiple regression analysis for variables predicting direct bullying for females in physical education (N = 125)

Variable	B	SE B	t
Competence	-.142	.057	-2.51*
Body Dissatisfaction	-.034	.027	-1.27

Note. * $p < .05$; $R^2 = .143$

Table 5.

Summary of multiple regression analysis for variables predicting indirect bullying for females in physical education (N = 125)

Variable	B	SE B	t
Competence	-.342	.078	-4.39*
Body Dissatisfaction	.017	.037	.444

Note. * $p < .05$; $R^2 = .143$

Table 6.

Summary of multiple regression analysis for variables predicting direct bullying for males in physical education (N = 89)

Variable	B	SE B	t
Competence	-.255	.067	-3.82*
Body Dissatisfaction	-.005	.034	-.147

Note. * $p < .05$; $R^2 = .148$

Table 7.

Summary of multiple regression analysis for variables predicting indirect bullying for males in physical education (N = 89)

Variable	B	SE B	t
Competence	-.386	.103	-3.75*
Body Dissatisfaction	-.017	.053	.324

Note. * $p < .05$; $R^2 = .148$

Table 8.

Means and Standard Deviations (SD) of Dependent Variables

Dependent Variables	Overall	Male	Female	Intends to take PE	Does Not Intend to take PE
Direct Bullying					
Mean	1.30	1.25	1.34	1.23	1.46
SD	.39	.38	.39	.28	.52
Indirect Bullying					
Mean	1.47	1.36	1.54	1.38	1.68
SD	.57	.58	.56	.50	.66
Physical Competence					
Mean	3.70	3.89	3.57	3.83	3.41
SD	.62	.56	.62	.63	.65
Body Dissatisfaction					
Mean		.79	-1.05	-.43	-.49
SD		1.10	1.34	1.11	1.38

Table 9.

Summary of emergent themes producing enjoyment in physical education

Theme	<i>Number of Comments (n)</i>	<i>Percentage of Comments (%)</i>
Fun	87	24
Staying fit	74	20.4
Being with friends	58	16
Learning new activities	55	15.1
Competence	39	10.7
Physical education different traditional classes	20	5.5
Not being bullied	17	4.7
Good teacher	8	2.2
Competition	5	1.4
Totals	363	100

*Table 10.**Summary of emergent themes not producing enjoyment in physical education*

Theme	<i>Number of Comments (n)</i>	<i>Percentage of Comments (%)</i>
Incompetence	10	33.3
Bullying	7	23.3
Fitness Testing	3	10
Competition	3	10
Other (Physical education unimportant; not being with friends; dislike of health class; disruptive classmates; dislike of activities)	7	23.3
Totals	30	100

APPENDIX A

Brock Research Ethics Board (REB) Approval

DATE: September 12, 2008

FROM: Michelle McGinn, Chair Research Ethics Board (REB)

TO: Dr. Jamie Mandigo, Physical Education & Kinesiology
Vanessa Hurley

FILE: 08-033 MANDIGO/HURLEY

TITLE: Physical education dropout: The impact of bullying, body image and physical competence.

The Brock University Research Ethics Board has reviewed the above research proposal.

DECISION: Accepted as clarified.

This project has received ethics clearance for the period of **September 12, 2008 to October 31, 2008** subject to full REB ratification at the Research Ethics Board's next scheduled meeting. The clearance period may be extended upon request. *The study may now proceed.*

Please note that the Research Ethics Board (REB) requires that you adhere to the protocol as last reviewed and cleared by the REB. During the course of research no deviations from, or changes to, the protocol, recruitment, or consent form may be initiated without prior written clearance from the REB. The Board must provide clearance for any modifications before they can be implemented. If you wish to modify your research project, please refer to <http://www.brocku.ca/researchservices/forms> to complete the appropriate form Revision or Modification to an Ongoing Application.

Adverse or unexpected events must be reported to the REB as soon as possible with an indication of how these events affect, in the view of the Principal Investigator, the safety of the participants and the continuation of the protocol.

If research participants are in the care of a health facility, at a school, or other institution or community organization, it is the responsibility of the Principal Investigator to ensure that the ethical guidelines and clearance of those facilities or institutions are obtained and filed with the REB prior to the initiation of any research protocols.

The Tri-Council Policy Statement requires that ongoing research be monitored. A Final Report is required for all projects upon completion of the project. Researchers with projects lasting more than one year are required to submit a Continuing Review Report annually. The Office of Research Services will contact you when this form *Continuing Review/Final Report* is required.

Please quote your REB file number on all future correspondence.

MM/law

Lori Walker, Senior Research Ethics Officer
Brock University, Office of Research Services
500 Glenridge Ave, St. Catharines, ON L2S 3A1

APPENDIX B

Consent Form: Introductory Script

Good morning/afternoon,

My name is Vanessa Hurley and I am a Masters student at Brock University in Health and Physical Education. I am here today to talk to you about a study that I will be conducting about body image, physical competence and bullying in physical education class at your school. This is an important issue with many teenagers across Canada. The study will ask for the participation of grade ten students in this class. In the past ten years, many students have dropped out of physical education class, usually after taking one credit in grade 9. The purpose of this study is to determine if the way one perceives their bodies and their skill level, as well as being bullied by others in physical education class has any effect on furthering participation in physical education.

Participation in this study is voluntary. This means that you do not have to take part in it if you do not feel comfortable. On the day that the questionnaires are handed out, I will be handing out questionnaires to everyone in the class. Only those who have permission to participate in the study will fill it in. Your school's youth counsellor will be present when you are filling out the survey in case anyone needs to speak to them about an issue arising from the questionnaire. For those who are not participating, I will ask that you do move to another classroom with your teacher until the questionnaire has been completed. For the study, participants will be asked to fill out a questionnaire that asks a variety of questions about how they feel about their body, their athletic skills, and their experiences with bullying during physical education class. The questionnaire is completely anonymous. This means that your name will not be on it, and no one will see what you write on your questionnaire except me. By doing this, there will be no chance that any of your classmates will know of how you feel or what you write. In the event a portion of your writing is chosen to be in the findings of this study, a pseudonym- which means a made up name, will be used. A copy of the findings from this study will be available in your school library within the next year. I will now hand out information and two consent forms that I ask you to read and also bring home to show your parents.

Debriefing Script

Ask your parents to read over both forms, and have them fill out the consent form- circling if they give you permission to participate or if they decide against your participation. Along with your parents, I will ask for your signature- this notes that you have read the consent form and know what is expected from you during the study. Once you have done this, bring the consent form back and hand it in to your teacher within the next week. Keep the other consent form for your own records. Please remember that you do not have to participate in this study if you do not want to. If you change your mind after you have handed in your consent form, let your teacher know. If you have any questions, my phone number and email are found on both forms. Please do not hesitate to contact me. Does anyone have any questions? Thank you for your time.

APPENDIX C

Survey Information Letter

**BROCK UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND
KINESIOLOGY**

Information Letter

TITLE: *Physical education dropout: The impact of bullying, body image and physical competence.*

Principal Investigator: Vanessa Hurley, Master of Arts Candidate, Brock University

February 2009

Dear Parent or Guardian:

I am a graduate student at Brock University and I am conducting a study that examines

the impact of bullying, body image, and physical competence on physical education dropout among teenagers. Physical education participation is important in the development of healthy lifestyles as well as academic performance. However, it has been found that 50% of students will drop out of physical education class after they have achieved one credit. In my study, I am seeking to understand how one's body image and experiences with being bullied in physical education impacts the decision to participate in the class after one physical education credit has been achieved.

I would like to include your child in my study. The study will take place in February of 2009 and will be comprised of one 20 minute session with your child at their school. During this 20 minute session, your child will complete a survey which asks them about their experiences in physical education thus far. The investigator and school's youth counsellor will be present during the time that the study takes place. The survey will be completed in a classroom where participants will receive the questionnaire and only those with consent will be permitted to complete it. Those students who are not participating will be moved to a separate class and supervised by their teacher. Your child's name will not be identified in any part of the study and all of her responses will be kept confidential. Pseudonyms will be assigned to each participant's data and written statements. Up until the time questionnaires are handed into the investigator, your child will have the right to withdrawal. Due to the anonymity of the responses on the questionnaire, the investigator cannot report incidents of bullying to the classroom teacher. The youth counsellor from your child's school will also be available in the event that he or she wishes to discuss bullying and body image issues.

Additionally, The Kid's Help Phone line is a service available to youth who wish to remain anonymous while disclosing personal issues to counsellors. The number of

the toll-free line is 1-800-688-6868. The line is open twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. There is also a website where youth can post anonymous messages to a counsellor if they do not feel comfortable calling into the phone line. The address of the website is <http://www.kidshelpphone.ca>. This site also offers many resources on what bullying is and how to deal with bullying issues at school. The Dove Campaign for Real Beauty offers a website to young girls about body image and redefining the definitions of beauty. There are many resources available to educate females on how to deal with the pressures of peers as well as the media. The address of the website is <http://www.campaignforrealbeauty.ca>.

The Research Advisory Committee of the School Board, the Brock University Research Ethics Board (file # 08-033), as well as the Principal of your child's school have officially approved this study. When the study is completed, a report on the findings will be available in the school library for interested participants, parents, and guardians.

Please view the form attached to this letter and return it to your child's teacher by next week. Please keep the second copy of the form for your own records. If, on the research day your child is unwilling or unable to participate, his or her wishes will be respected.

A copy of the results from this study will be available in the library of your child's school after its completion in the upcoming year.

If you would like to receive more information about the study, please contact me at (905) 688-5550 ext. 4481 or vh07fq@brocku.ca. You may also contact my faculty supervisor at Brock University in the Department of Physical Education & Kinesiology, Dr. Jamie Mandigo at (905) 688-5550 ext.4789 or jmandigo@brocku.ca.

Thank you for your consideration and cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,
Vanessa Hurley
Master of Arts Candidate, Brock University

APPENDIX D

Consent Form

**BROCK UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND
KINESIOLOGY**

Informed Consent Form

TITLE: *Physical education dropout: The impact of bullying, body image and physical competence.*

Principal Investigator: Vanessa Hurley, Master of Arts Candidate, Brock University

- This study asks for your child to complete an in-class questionnaire that helps to determine what factors influence physical education dropout after grade nine. The questionnaire measures personal perceptions of body image through the use of a pre-drawn scale. Additionally, the questionnaire asks participants about their experiences with bullying in physical education class, as well as perceptions of their own physical competence. This questionnaire should take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete. The school's youth counsellor will be present in the room when the study takes place. The questionnaire will be collected by the principal investigator after it has been completed by your child.

- Given the instrumentation used to collect the information in this study (e.g., the questionnaire), the risks associated with participation revolve around the disclosure of personal or sensitive information. This may make some participants uncomfortable. The investigator cannot report bullying incidents explained by participants because of the anonymity of the questionnaire's responses. The contact information of the school's youth counsellor is available to your child if they wish to discuss bullying incidents.

- In the event the investigator notes a large number of bullying incidents stated in the questionnaires, steps will be taken to contact the classroom teacher as well as principal of the school. Additionally, the Kid's Help Phone line is a service that offers anonymity and counselling to the caller. The toll-free number is 1-800-668-6868. There is also a website where youth can post anonymous messages to a counsellor if they do not feel comfortable calling in to the phone line. The address of the website is <http://www.kidshelpphone.ca>. This site also offers many resources on what bullying is and how to deal with bullying issues at school. The Dove Campaign for Real Beauty offers a website to youth about body image and redefining beauty. There are many resources available on this educational site and can be found at the website <http://www.campaignforrealbeauty.ca>.

- All personal data will be kept strictly confidential and all information will be coded so that your child's name is not associated with her answers. Only the investigator will have access to the data, which will be stored in a locked office. All data will be shredded five years after the completion of the study.

- Your participation and your child's participation in this study are voluntary and you and/or your child may withdraw from the study for any reason at any time up until

the questionnaires have been collected without penalty. There is no obligation for your child to answer any question/participate in any aspect of this project that she considers invasive, offensive or inappropriate.

- Results of this study may be published in professional journals and presented at conferences. Feedback about this study will be available from Vanessa Hurley within the next year. To contact Vanessa, please email her at vh07fq@brocku.ca or (905) 688-5550 ext. 4481. A copy of this study will also be available in the school library within the next year.

- This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the Research Ethics Board at Brock University (file # 08-033). If you have any comments or concerns about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Research Ethics Office at (905) 688-5550 ext. 3035, or reb@brocku.ca.
- If you have any questions or concerns about your participation in the study, you may contact **Vanessa Hurley** at (905) 688-5550 ext. 4481/ email: vh07fq@brocku.ca, Faculty Supervisor, **Dr. Jamie Mandigo** at (905) 688-5550 ext. 4789/email: jmandigo@brocku.ca
- Thank you for your help! Please keep this portion of the consent form and complete the bottom portion and return to your child's homeroom teacher

Child's Name: _____

School: _____

- ☐ I have read and understood all relevant information pertaining to this study
- ☐ I understand that I or my child may ask questions in the future
- ☐ I give permission for my child to participate in the Brock University study conducted by Vanessa Hurley.
- ☐ I do **NOT** give permission for my child to participate in the Brock University study conducted by Vanessa Hurley.

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____

Date: _____

Signature of Student: _____

Date: _____

Signature of Researcher: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX E

Survey: Introductory Script

Good morning/afternoon:

My name is Vanessa Hurley. I was in about two weeks ago to talk to you about your participation in a study I am conducting at Brock University about physical education dropout. Today, I will be handing out questionnaires to everyone in the class. Only those who have permission to participate in the study will fill it in. Your youth counsellor is also here today to listen to any concerns that may come up as you fill out the questionnaire. For those who are not participating, I ask that at this time you move with your teacher to a different classroom. It is very important to keep noise levels down so that participants are not interrupted during this time.

For those who are participating: if at any point before the questionnaires are handed out, or during the time you are filling one out, you wish to stop your participation, please write 'withdraw' on any section of the questionnaire. You do not have to raise your hand to let me know you have chosen to withdraw from the study. If you do chose to withdraw, please sit at your seat until I ask for the surveys to be handed in. You can stop your participation at any point today. The survey should take approximately fifteen minutes to complete. Please do not write your name on them and do not show or tell your answers to any classmates. The questionnaire is completely anonymous and will not be seen by any other person but myself. Are there any questions before we start? To keep your answers as private as possible, the questionnaire will be placed on your desk face down until all are handed out. If at any time during the completion of your questionnaire you need clarification, please raise your hand for assistance.

Debriefing Script

Now that I have collected all of the surveys, I would like to thank you all for your participation and cooperation today. Please let me remind you that all of the questionnaires collected today are confidential and the answers provided will not have your name attached to it. I will ask that you do not reveal or speak of your answers to fellow classmates on the basis of privacy and confidentiality. Right now I want to talk to you about what bullying is. Bullying is defined as "repeated exposure to purposeful attempts to injure or inflict discomfort and pain on another individual through words, physical contact, gestures, or exclusion from a group". Bullying is often defined as an ongoing occurrence that is

unprovoked and unwanted by victims. It is intentionally harmful, aggressive behaviour where there exists an imbalance of power between two parties in a relationship. In most cases, the individual who is in a position of power will begin to bully the other person. The power advantage found within these relationships often arises from differentials in size, strength, physical abilities, social status, personality type, and popularity. It is often hurtful and humiliating. The victim is not to blame. Please be aware that there are resources out there if you feel the need to talk to someone about an incident of bullying at school that is bothering you. Please contact the school's youth counsellor or a staff member if you want to talk to them about any bullying or body image issues going on in the school. The Kid's Help Phone line is also available to you, the number is 1-800-688-6868 or website 'kids help phone line dot ca'. This information can also be found on the information letter you brought home a few weeks ago.

Body image is defined as "a person's perceptions, thoughts, feelings and behaviours towards his or her body". Some people associate the shape and size of their body with how they feel about their body. Included in this are negative feelings of anxiety, distress, and sadness as well as positive feelings such as pride and comfort. What others may say about your body may also affect how you feel about it. However, every person should be proud about how they look. Body size does not equate into how beautiful, cute, or how popular you are. Do not compare yourselves with magazine covers or models who have been airbrushed to resemble something they are not. The Dove Campaign for Real Beauty has done some great work on redefining the definition of beauty and what body image is. I encourage you all to visit the website "campaign for real beauty dot ca" for some resources into young teenagers and dealing with body issues.

In the next few months I will be tabulating the data and writing a report on the findings. Upon completion and final approval by Brock University, a copy of this study will be placed in your library. In the meantime, if you need to get in touch with me for any reason, please do not hesitate to do so. My contact number and email can be found on the consent and information forms handed to you last week. Thank you again for your cooperation.

APPENDIX F

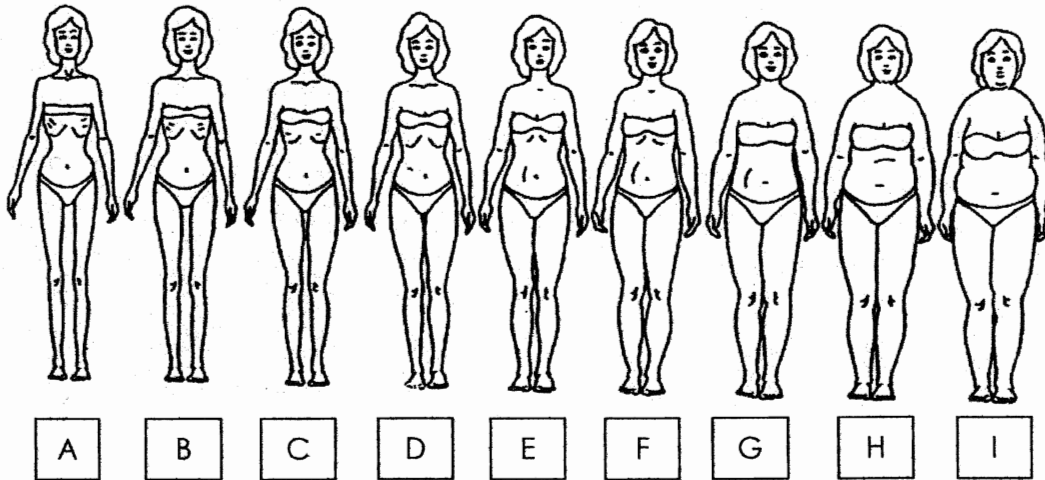
Survey Instrument

Grade 10 Survey

Your Age: _____

Please check off any of the following below:

	You have completed:	You are currently taking or are registered in:	You plan on taking:	You would like to take, but cannot due to timetable conflicts:
Grade 9 Healthy Active Living Education- Open PPL 10				
Grade 9 Personal & Fitness Activities- PAF 10				
Grade 10 Healthy Active Living Education- Open- PPL 20				
Grade 10 Personal & Fitness Activities- PAF 20				
Grade 11 Healthy Active Living Education- Open- PPL 30				
Grade 11 Personal & Fitness Activities- PAF 30				
Grade 11 Health for Life- Open- PPZ 30				
Grade 12 Healthy Active Living Education- Open- PPL 40				
Grade 12 Personal & Fitness Activities- PAF 40				
Grade 12 Recreation & Fitness Leadership- College Preparation- PFL 4C				
Grade 12 Exercise Science- University Preparation- PSE 4U				



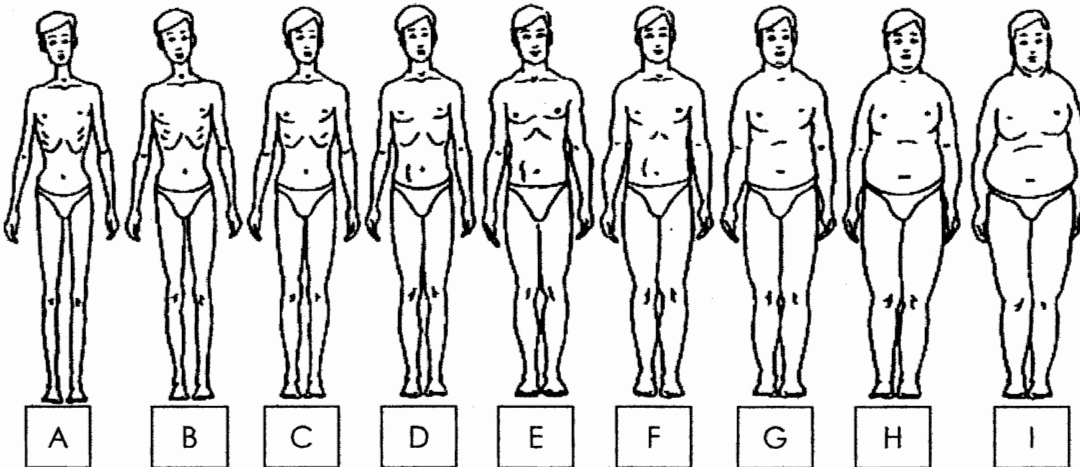
GIRLS ONLY: Based on the scale below, please complete the following questions.

Please circle the letter of the figure that you feel resembles your **CURRENT** figure:

A B C D E F G H I

Please circle the letter of the figure that you feel resembles your **IDEAL** figure:

A B C D E F G H I



BOYS ONLY: Based on the scale below, please complete the following questions.

Please circle the letter of the figure that you feel resembles your **CURRENT** figure:

A B C D E F G H I

Please circle the letter of the figure that you feel resembles your **IDEAL** figure:

A B C D E F G H I

For each of the questions below, think back to your experiences in physical education class using the scale provided, from **never** (1) to **always** (5).

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Almost always
1	2	3	4	5

1. Have you felt like classmates called you mean names because of how you looked in your gym uniform. 1 2 3 4 5
2. Have you felt as though classmates snickered or laughed at how you looked in your gym uniform in front of peers in your physical education class. 1 2 3 4 5
3. Have you felt like you were being left out on purpose when you and your peers participated in physical activities. 1 2 3 4 5
4. When you tried to talk to a fellow classmate, did you feel like you were being ignored or not listened to purposely. 1 2 3 4 5
5. Have you felt like you didn't have any friends to talk to in your physical education class because you were left out. 1 2 3 4 5
6. Have you overheard your fellow classmates gossiping about you behind your back in physical education class. 1 2 3 4 5
7. Do you feel that fellow classmates spread mean rumours about you in physical education class so that others would dislike you. 1 2 3 4 5
8. Have classmates told you that they disliked or hated you in physical education class and was that upsetting for you. 1 2 3 4 5
9. Do you think that you were often mocked about your athletic performance in physical education class. 1 2 3 4 5
10. Have fellow classmates told you they did not want you on their team when you participated in sport and physical activity. 1 2 3 4 5
11. Do you believe you were pushed or shoved intentionally by one of your fellow classmates in physical education class. 1 2 3 4 5
12. Have you been intentionally kicked, punched, or hit by one of 1 2 3 4 5

your fellow classmates in physical education class.

13. Has a fellow classmate threatened to hurt you physically while you were in physical education class. 1 2 3 4 5

14. Have you ever been scared or worried to attend your physical education class because you felt you were going to be bullied by peers. 1 2 3 4 5

For questions 15-20 below, think back to your experiences in physical education class using the scale provided, from **never** (1) to **almost always** (5).

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Frequently	Almost always
1	2	3	4	5

15. You felt satisfied with your athletic performances in physical education classes. 1 2 3 4 5

16. You thought you did pretty well at the activities you participated in during physical education classes compared to other students in the class. 1 2 3 4 5

17. You felt as though you couldn't do many of the activities in physical education. 1 2 3 4 5

18. After working at your activities in physical education classes for awhile, you felt pretty competent (capable). 1 2 3 4 5

19. You thought you were pretty good at the activities you participated in during physical education classes. 1 2 3 4 5

20. You felt that you were pretty skilled at the activities you participated in during physical education classes. 1 2 3 4 5

Please describe your experience in physical education class.

For example, do/did you enjoy it? Why or why not? *Please do not use specific names in order that anonymity be maintained.*

If you have experienced physical bullying against you (For example, someone pushing, kicking, or shoving you) in physical education class, please describe the situation. *Please do not use specific names in order that anonymity be maintained.*

If you have experienced social bullying against you (For example: girls exclude you, isolate you, or try to manipulate others against you) in physical education class, please describe the situation. *Please do not use specific names in order that anonymity be maintained.*

If you have experienced verbal bullying against you (For example: others teasing about your appearance or skill-level, taunting you, or gossiping about you) in physical education classes, please describe the situation. *Please do not use specific names in order that anonymity be maintained.*

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.